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SOCCER WEEKLY

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Cosmos crisis, another coach

By Graham Cooke & John Economos

Australia will leave a bitter taste in the mouth for Antonio Alzamendi, the coach hired and fired by Canberra Cosmos without the opportunity of taking charge of a single competitive game.

The tempestuous career of Canberra's National League club took a sudden and shocking turn yesterday when Alzamendi, the former Uruguayan World Cup star brought to this country with great fanfare just one month ago to take charge of the Cosmos, was unceremoniously pushed aside in what appears to be a lightening takeover of the club by Sydney-based interests.

Yesterday afternoon Alzamendi said he was in deep consultation with his lawyers, and it is possible some form of legal action will result.

There were many who opposed his appointment. The Cosmos web site carried opinions which were highly critical of the coaching job going to a non-English speaker with limited knowledge of the Australian soccer scene.

Then he had supplanted the popular local man, Mike Milovanovic, who had steered the club to five wins out of 10 games at the end of last season.

In addition, he made controversial decisions, including the dropping from the squad last week of local youngster Shane Lyons.

However, his abrupt departure means his successor will be faced with building a squad from scratch in six weeks. Any suggestions the Cosmos will do anything other than face another struggling season must now seem wildly optimistic.

The Canberra Cosmos having first been cut by Soccer Australia from participating in the coming season's NSL, then being reinstated, has within a short space of time, experienced a sensational 'trifecta' of events.

First, former incumbent coach, Mike Milovanovic, suddenly resigned, stating that the new terms offered to him were unacceptable.

Secondly, (and just weeks later), Chairman Danny Moulis resigned, giving work-related and extended periods on overseas trips as reasons that he could not afford the time to steer the Club.

Yesterday morning, (Monday), Canberra racked up its 'trifecta of troubles' when the recently appointed new coach, Uruguayan Antonio Alzamendi, was suddenly dumped and almost instantly replaced by young Leon Gardikiotis from Sydney.

And all these events taking place well before the NSL season has even kicked off.

This morning, (Tuesday), the Canberra Cosmos will hold a press conference at the Belconnen Soccer Club at 10.30am where the journos will meet Gardikiotis.

It's believed that Alzamendi was experiencing some problems with his 'business visa' that had been granted to him.

As well, it's believed that a Sydney businessman, together with some colleague-investors, want to buy-out the Canberra Cosmos.

Soccer Canberra has a most significant majority stake in the Comos.

It's also understood that the 'mystery Sydney businessman' had strong desires to appoint his own coach.

ABSW last night was informed that that coach was non other than Sydney man and former national boss of Tahiti, Leon Gardikiotis.

It's also believed that former coach of now defunct club, the Gippsland Falcons, Jeff Hopkins, had also been keen for the position at the Comos.

Out

Antonio Alzamendi: Recently appointed, now dumped.

In

Leon Gardikiotis: Canberra Cosmos' new coach.

Aussie international Harry Kewell of Leeds being tackled by Claus Lundekvan of Southampton, who was then sent-off after pulling down Kewell during the match between Leeds and Southampton in the English Premiership over the weekend.

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Born from over 100 years of passion for pasta
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Born from over 100 years of passion for pasta

Turn to Pages 12-13 for Special Lift-Out of the Italian Serie A Fixture List

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Lithuania in the groove after failed Latvia friendly

National chief tactician, Frank Farina is hoping to secure an international friendly against European minnows, Lithuania as replacement for Latvia, following confirmation last week that the proposed friendly between Australia and Latvia scheduled for 1 September had been cancelled.

"One reason is difficulty in terms of playing personnel. That game will be off, but we are hoping that we can get Lithuania in October," Farina explained on return from Shizuoka, Japan where Australia were beaten 3-0 by their hosts in the maiden edition of the AFC/OFC Challenge Contest.

"We always wanted one game between September and October and hopefully we will still get that, and it will be closer to the November games. So if it comes off, and we play Lithuania, I'll be happy."

The match is yet to be agreed between the two countries though, but Farina is remaining positive.

Feelers from Soccer circles indicated that the Latvian FA pulled out of the proposed friendly following the likelihood that Australia's Europe-based players would not be available for the game.

Farina dismissed talk, however, that his European-based players told him that they did not want to be involved in the Latvia match.

Latvia, who are also heavily-involved in qualifying matches for the 2002 World Cup finals were also looking to test their strength against Australia's better-known players in the now-failed friendly. Just last week, they lost 1-0 to visiting Ukraine in a busy week of international friendlies across Europe.

Reflecting on the listless 3-0 loss to Japan last week, Farina shied away from directly blaming the players on the night.

"I always look to get some positives out of every game we play and I feel that there were some to come out of the game," Farina said.

"I thought Kasey Wehrman battled well. Luke Casserly made a few errors but in the end he was strong throughout."

"Young Mark Robertson I feel did very well for us. Steve Horvat reinforced that he is capable of playing at centre half and in the middle of the park as well," he said.

Frank Farina: "We always wanted one game between September and October.

PARRAMATTA TRIO RUE AXED SOLOMON ISLAND DEBUT

Parramatta Power's Ahmad Elrich, Mark Byrnes and Brett Holman who were billed to make their senior debut yesterday in the proposed friendly against Solomon Island, are devastated by Soccer Australia's late decision to cancel game

The players were told late on Friday that the trip would not go ahead because of security problems in the Solomon Islands.

"I'm gutted," Mark Byrnes reacted from Brisbane where the team was gathered prior to departure. "It's going to be very difficult to get another opportunity to play for the Socceroos before the World Cup. Frank(Farina) is likely to play his best players."

The trio had been in Brisbane most of last week to prepare for the botched game.

In a statement on Friday, Soccer Australia said it called-off the Socceroo' planned friendly against the Solomon Islands following advice given to it on the current security situation, consequent upon which the security of the players and travelling party could not be guaranteed.

The match had been scheduled by the Solomon Islands Football Federation to coincide with the official opening of the renovated Lawson Tama Stadium in Honiara yesterday.

SA boss, Ian Knop explained further that the Solomon Islands trip "posed a risk to our players, and given this advice, we decided against the visit proceeding".

"It is with great disappointment that we take this action, especially as we value the role Australia plays in the Oceania region and the importance of the occasion for the Solomon Islands, but the safety of our players and officials is paramount."

Japanese winger, Hiroshi Matsuda beats Australia's Steve Laybutt just before Japan's first goal in last week's OFC/AFC Challenge contest in Shizuoka.

POPOVIC GETS ENGLISH LEAGUE GREENLIGHT

Aussie international, Tony Popovic was last week successful in his appeal and has now got his work permit as well as a Crystal Palace contract.

The new Crystal Palace signing Tony Popovic was also billed to make his debut over the weekend against Stockport County in an English nationwide first division game.

The Australian star defender had his work permit granted following an appeal by the London club during the week.

Speaking on the positive news, Palace assistant coach Steve Kember said: "The appeal was successful and we've got the work permit, but we've still got to work a few things out.

"He has been very impressive in pre-season with us and he's very experienced. He has 40-odd international caps."

Interestingly, Popovic could be going-up against another Aussie international, 33 year-old defender Jason Van Blerk who has also just agreed terms with Stockport.

Due to the initial hiccup suffered the previous week in his transfer to Crystal Palace, Popovic pulled out of last week's game between Australia and Japan.

Shane Lyons: "It's a slap in the face for me."

LYONS SHOCKED AT COSMOS RED CARD

By Graham Cooke

Cosmos winger, Shane Lyons expressed shock and disappointment when told last week that his services were not required by new Cosmos coach Antonio Alzamendi.

"The thing I can't understand," said Lyons last week, "is that I was told the club wanted me, I refrained from playing elsewhere in the off-season at the request of Cosmos, I was on the Cosmos' retained players list. Despite the fact I have an offer of re-employment, and I have stuck by the Cosmos during all the drama of the past few months"

"I do feel unfairly treated . . . I'm a Canberra boy and I suppose this shows that doesn't come into consideration any more," Lyons said.

"To tell me this now, when other clubs are just about full, is a slap in the face for me, and has severely hampered my career progress. My manager and I will now be talking to the PFA and my solicitors. I can't believe Cosmos would do this to me"

Lyons talked of involving the players union and possibly taking legal action, but his manager, Chris Tanner, was more conciliatory. "I have spoken to the Cosmos people and I am still hopeful that fairness will prevail," Tanner said.

In his defence, Cosmos acting General Manager, Chris Dillon said all players - except contracted players Mark Hagger and Robbie Hooker - were told they would have to prove themselves to be included in the new 2001-2 squad.

Dillon said Lyons was placed on the retained players list but denied this meant the club was obliged to keep him on for next season.

"All a retained players list means is the club is interested in having them retained, so if they go and play somewhere else that club would have to pay us some training compensation," Dillon said. "Our only moral obligation was to give Shane an opportunity to show his worth to the new coach and we've done that."

First Leg At Home, Advantageous

By John Economos

EDDIE THOMSON, Australia's former World Cup manager, was severely hammered by 'experts' back in August of 1993 when he elected to play Australia's first leg against Argentina in Sydney.

The 'experts' called Thomson crazy for wanting the first leg at home.

But Thomson absorbed all the flak and said nothing.

The main three reasons that led Big Eddie to make up his mind to play the first leg in Australia, were as follows:

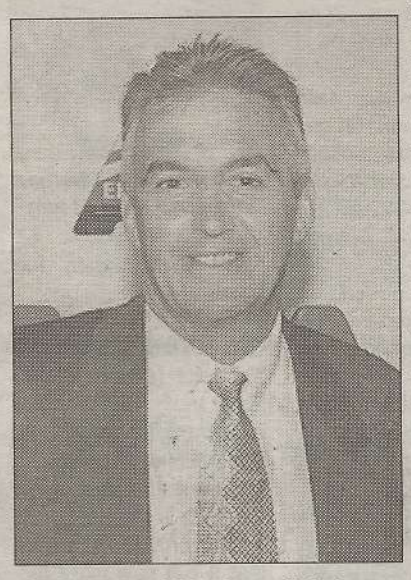
a) Argentina had just been thrashed 0-5 by Colombia and the fans were understandably incredibly hostile towards their side.

Argentina's national team was now under extreme pressure, so much pressure in fact that they desperately recalled the great Maradona to save them.

b) Thomson rapidly read the intense and hostile pressure, (he was over there to monitor the slaughter by Colombia), that he immediately made up his mind to want Argentina to travel to Sydney for the first leg.

c) By doing this, Thomson not only increased this already built-in pressure on Argentina, but automatically, as well, would force Argentina to travel 'twice', (second leg as well). A huge advantage for Australia.

Well it's now history that Thomson's thinking almost paid off.



EDDIE THOMSON: Australia's former World Cup manager.

The Maradona-led Argentina really struggled in the second leg back in Buenos Aires, (the first leg ended 1-1), and relied on an 'own goal' to scramble to a 1-0 win over Australia.

So why is *ABSW* digging all this up now, and almost exactly to this month, but eight years later?

Simple.

Thomson's same thinking in 1993 should not be ignored by Australia's current young World Cup manager, Frank Farina.

Farina needs every single bit of an edge he can get if he wants to lift Australia into the Japan/Korea Finals next year.

It's essential that Colombia or Uruguay is made to travel first to Melbourne.

As has now surfaced through FIFA late last week, Australia's last World Cup qualifiers against the fifth placed South American nation, have been brought forward to Wednesday November 21st, with the second leg to be played on November 25th .

With Australia set to play France on November 11th at the M.C.G., it now means that Farina's serious international schedule, is now more compact, reduced down to the space spanning two weeks.

This more compact international schedule also augurs well for the demands that will be made on our Euro-based players.

This period of a little over two weeks will lessen the pending, (but certain), ire of the Euro clubs, that have our Australian internationals on their payrolls.

Advantage Though Could Be Lost

EXPANDING on the above merits of having our fifth-placed South American opponent travelling twice in late November, there does lie a most definite inbuilt 'trap' for Australia.

A 'trap' that nevertheless can be, (and must be), urgently avoided at all costs by our World Cup manager, Frank Farina.

In fact *ABSW*, hopefully, and somewhat suspiciously believes, that Farina may already have anticipated this potential 'trap' and has thus accordingly, may have already schemed to bypass this definite pitfall.

The inbuilt 'trap' lying in Australia's path is simple.

Sure the South Americans now will certainly travel twice for both World Cup qualifiers.

This arduous aero-crusade, they just cannot avoid.

But what of our very own Euro-based players?

If our 'Euros' fly into Melbourne for the clash against France on November 11th, then immediately report back to their respective England, Scottish, Spanish and German clubs, then fly back again to Melbourne 10 days later for the first leg against the South Americans, that initial advantage we right now have, will go straight out the window.

Compounding this unquestionably aggravating situation, our Euros would then be set to fly out yet again, (from Melbourne), this time bound for South America for the second leg of our W.C. qualifier.

All this flying in, flying out, flying back in again, then flying back out, CAN, and MUST be, avoided.

Our Euro-based players that arrive for the clash against the Frenchmen, MUST be our full World Cup squad, and more importantly, MUST stay here in Australian, fullstop.

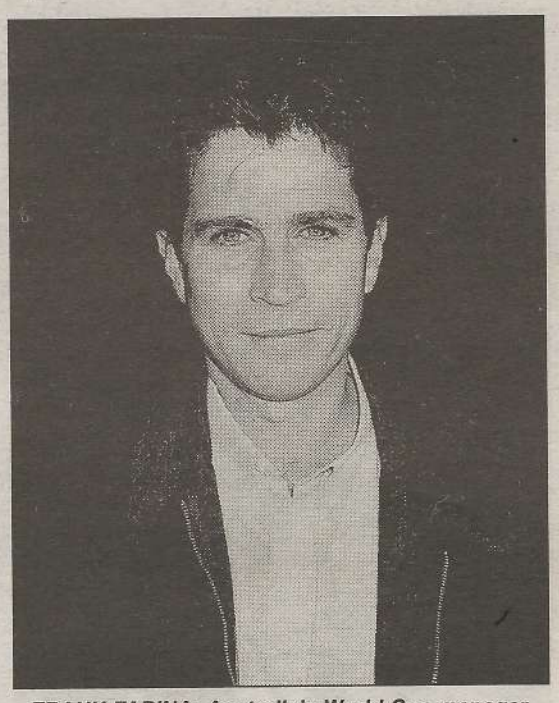
After the game against France, Farina's World Cup squad must be locked up in a training camp somewhere out of Melbourne, (but in Victoria), to await the arrival of the South Americans 10 days later.

Doing this, most of our Euro-based players would instantly wipe out at least 40,000 klms of air travel.

Maybe this is the sole, vital reason, why Farina last week released a warning, that all Euro-based players selected for the game against France, must make themselves available, otherwise they will not be considered for the two World Cup qualifiers.

Already most of our international players have stacked up a huge pile of 'frequent flier' points.

In fact the only other more frequent fliers than our own internationals, have feathers.



FRANK FARINA: Australia's World Cup manager.

JOEYS OFF TO US FOR W-CUP BUILD-UP

Australia's U-17 squad, the Joeys, departed for Miami, United States of America yesterday, on the first leg of their build-up towards the FIFA Under 17 World Championships. They will spend a fortnight in the popular US resort city in preparation for the cadet world cup.

"Everyone is fit, there have been no injury concerns, so things are looking fine for us," said National Youth Coach Ange Postecoglou, prior to the team's departure yesterday at the Qantas Terminal of the Sydney airport.

"We're looking forward to the training camp in Miami, where the boys will get a chance to play some matches against quality sides in the lead-up to the World Championships." he said.

The team of 20 players departed Sydney at about 5.00pm for Miami where they will set up training camp, which will involve friendly games against the United States and Argentinean Under 17 side, before heading to Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago where the finals of the FIFA Under 17 World Championships will kick-off on 9th September.

Australia has been grouped with Croatia, home nation Trinidad & Tobago and reigning Champions Brazil, with their first match a replay of the 1999 Final where the Joeys lost on penalties to the South Americans.

The full draws for Australia's Group A (based in Port of Spain) is below:

Date:	Kick-off (AEST)	Match:
13-09-01	7.00am (14-09)	Trinidad & Tobago Vs Croatia
	12.00am (15-09)	Australia Vs Brazil
16-09-01	7.00am (17-09)	Trinidad & Tobago Vs Australia
16-09-01	9.30am (17-09)	Croatia Vs Brazil
19-09-01	10.00am (20-09)	Brazil Vs Trinidad & Tobago
19-09-01	1.30am (20-09)	Croatia Vs Australia

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OR WRITE TO: P.O. BOX 70, WEST RYDE. 2114.

Soccer Australia National Futsal Commission

National Coaching Positions

— National Mens Coach
— National Womens Coach

Applications are now invited and will be received up to close of business Friday 31st August 2001. Applications should be directed to Mr Ian Holmes, General Manager, Soccer Australia, PO Box Q1645, QVB Post Office, NSW 1230. All applications should be clearly marked "Futsal Coaching Positions."

Applications will be considered by the National Futsal Commission for appointments and applicants should address the following selection criteria:

— Formal Futsal coaching and other relevant qualifications/accreditation
— A sound knowledge of the International Futsal environment
— Demonstrated elite Futsal coaching experience at both State and National level
— Knowledge of an experience with development of individual fitness and coaching programs
— Sound understanding of the sport science environment and expertise in translating testing results to improve athlete performance
— Ability to plan for remote coaching and player development
— Applicants are invited to propose a national selection methodology.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE
Soccer Club

The Sharks are now accepting applications for Coaches and Managers for the Season 2002

Cadets and Youth League
Under 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17

Coaches and managers will be required to work within the Club Development program. Reporting to the Director of Coaching. Applications close 17th September, 2001.

Please submit your application, including resumé to:

Sutherland Shire Soccer Football Club Inc.

Attention: The Secretary
P.O. Box 583
Gymea. NSW. 2228.

PREMIER LEAGUE TRIALS

First Grade Wednesday 22, 29 August 2001
Starting 6.30pm
Under 19s Tuesday 21, 23, Thursday 28, 30 August 2001
Starting 6.30pm

Venue:
Seymour Shaw Soccer Stadium
Ground Number Two
The Boulevarde
Miranda. NSW. 2228.

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

By John Economos

MICHAEL OWEN, Liverpool and England's World Cup magnificent marksman, last week-end opened his scoring account in spectacular style in the first Round of the new F.A. Premier League in England.

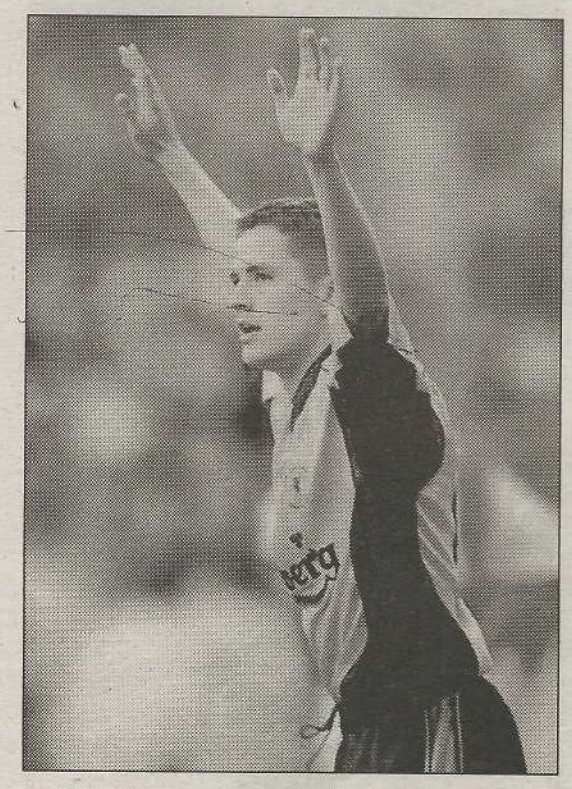
The exceptionally mobile marksman, nailed in a brilliant brace that ultimately sunk the visitors from London, West Ham 2-1.

The previous week in the Charity Shield against the monotonous League Champions Manchester United, it was Owen that early in the first half easily glided through the heart of United's defence to score Liverpool's second goal that gave the Reds a 2-1 victory and the coveted Shield.

The striker's scoring form was so erratic, in fact as erratic as the bounce lifting off the current Test pitch at Headingley.

His form is as erratic as the bounce at Headingley.

WOLLONGONG WOLVES, Australia's League champions the past two years, depart on Thursday for a pre-season tour of China.



Michael Owen: 15 goals in his last nine games.

In his last two matches, Owen has scored three goals.

Even more startling, in his last nine games, the 22 year old Owen, has drilled in an incredible 15 goals.

Barring any serious injuries, (always a persistent and threatening danger for all explosively paced players), this highly gifted goal-ace could develop into an all-time England great, not seen since the days of England captain, Gary Linekar.

❑❑❑❑

BACK HOME, and speaking of goalscorers, who is the much overrated NSL striker that's currently still locked in argument over new terms with his stubborn manager-coach?

The defiant NSL coach is flatly refusing to give his 'striker' a raise in a new contract, considering that player had a very poor year last season in which he miserably failed to score the bag of goals that was expected of him.

League Champion coach Ronnie Corry, stated to 'Good Oil' last night:

"We'll be on a nine day tour and play two games along the way.

"The first is expected to be against the Champions of China and the second against some team in the City of Shanghai.

"I'm taking a 17 player squad and we'll be without Grant Barlow who still is on loan to Singapore.

"Our new signings of Sean Babic, Alex Castro, Buddy Farah plus Naum Sekulovski will be on the tour."

Corry went on to add: "I have included in my 17 man squad two 19 year olds in Beren Sullivan and Liam Austin that have shown some solid potential."

The Wollongong coach started his pre-season training two weeks ago.

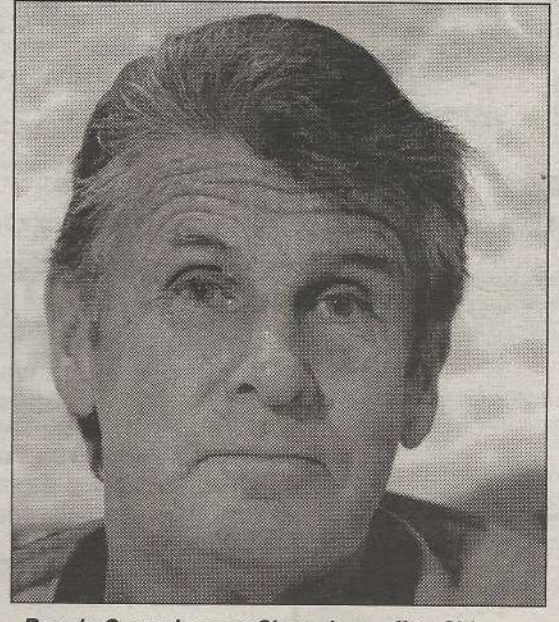
Corry is most serious in challenging for the Club's, (and for Australia), a record third consecutive League Championship.

❑❑❑❑

THE PARRAMATTA POWER next month is planning a pre-season Bar-B-Q for the Soccer media, but with a difference.

The Power's promotional people want their team to play a friendly fun match against members of the media.

Possibly with the Power players doing the match-report as well.



Ronnie Corry: League Champions off to China on Thursday.

❑❑❑❑

KRIS TRAJANOVSKI, Marconi's experienced and constructive striker, signed last week for the Brisbane Strikers.

It was almost certain that 'Traja' was going to shift to the Northern Spirit to rejoin coach Mickey Hickman when both were at Sydney Olympic.

As well as signing Trajanovski, the Strikers snapped up the Perth Glory's John Carbone.

Both have the elastic ability to play as strikers or midfielders.

This duo will link up with the Strikers' Brazilian ace, Fernando Rech.

Strikers' coach John Kosmina stated to the media: "We are pleased to have signed a player of Kris' ability and experience.

Kris Trajanovski: Quality striker signed by Brisbane Strikers last week.

"He's a real good professional and has the ability to bring other people into play.

"Being honest, I've been after 'Traja' for a very long time.

"With John, (Carbone), he's had limited opportunities at Perth Glory but we know he also has the ability to develop into a top player given the opportunity.

"The addition of two players of this quality, gives us a squad of talented youth with quality experienced players.

"There's no reason why we cannot be a Top Six contender," ended Kosmina, the former Australian World Cup captain.

Trajanovski is a most valuable player, equally comfortable as a striker or as an attacking right midfielder.

❑❑❑❑

SYDNEY OLYMPIC last week completed a hat-trick of signings from the Brisbane Strikers when they snapped up attacking midfielder, Jeremy Harris.

The Rockhampton-born Harris back in 1993 had been spotted by coach Frank Arok and brought down to Sydney to play with Marconi for a season.

But Harris never fully settled in at Marconi and moved back to Queensland.

Prior to the signing of Harris, Olympic earlier in the off season had signed the Strikers' Jay North and Wayne Srhoj.

Olympic's captain and sweeper, Ante Juric, (as pre-empted by this column weeks ago), has now been officially loaned out to Norwegian First Division side, Molde.

Following two weeks of trials in June, the towering goal-scoring free-back was forced to return to Australia and patiently wait here till he was granted a Work Permit.

Jeremy Harris: Signed last week by Sydney Olympic.

In other news concerning Sydney Olympic, the team next season will most likely change its name to 'Olympic Sharks' that will make it more compliant with its new homeground, Shark Park out at Cronulla.

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ROBBIE SLATER's previous disciplinary charge imposed by Soccer Australia on the Northern Spirit Club captain, has been withdrawn.

Robbie Slater: Charges dropped against him late last week.

The Board of Commissioners at Soccer Australia recognised that Slater was representing a certain community view of disillusionment towards the management of the game in Australia at the time.

Soccer Australia believes that it can now move forward and engage individuals with experience in Soccer like Slater and harness their thoughts and commitments in a more constructive manner.

But isn't this just what this columnist has been advocating for years?

Have we not strongly suggested in years gone, (and yet again just two weeks ago), that some former, intelligent and imperatively, suitably qualified international players, should be standing for the Board of Commissioners at Soccer Australia?

Here we are not suggesting Slater.

We also are not suggesting any 30 or 35 year olds, but former and well respected internationals in the age bracket of at least 50 year olds.

They're out there.

Former internationals that for years have served both their clubs, as well as Australia, exceptionally well on the pitch.

And since retiring from international arenas, have done very well for themselves in the private sector.

Must we be forced to name them?

Our political leaders in Soccer may not know them.

But 'Joe Public' out there can name you a stack of them.

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AUSTRALIA's friendly international against the Solomon Islands set down to be played yesterday, (Monday), was suddenly cancelled by Soccer Australia late last Friday due to security concerns.

Soccer Australia could not be given a guarantee for the safety of our national team over there.

The match scheduled for yesterday was to celebrate the official opening of the remodelled Lawson Tama stadium in Honiara.

Soccer Australia's recently elected Chairman, Ian Knop, he stated to the media: "Upon a complete review of all current obligations that Soccer Australia was committed to, the decision was made that a visit to the Solomon Islands posed a risk to our players. and given this advice, we have decided against the visit proceeding."

Ian Knop: Cancels Australia's clash against the Solomon Islands.

Knop went on to add: "It is with great disappointment that we take this action, especially as we value the role Australia plays in the Oceania region and the importance of the occasion for the Solomon Islands.

"But the safety of our players and officials is paramount," Knop ended. How times have changed.

Let's wind the clock back to October of 1967, and in the very height of the Vietnam War. A very young Australia, led by captain John Warren, flew into that war-torn nation to play seven international matches in a tournament, (including against the very tough South Korea in the Final which Australia fiercely battled to win 2-3 after trailing 2-1).

FOR ADVERTISING IN ABSW, PLEASE CALL (02) 9744 6984

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

By John Economos

That Australian team, (coached by the Late Uncle Joe Vlasits), experienced nightly, the skies being lit up by flares as bombs exploded in nearby regions.

When Australia initially landed in Saigon, their plane taxied along the runway which was flanked on either side for three kilometres by row after row of monstrous American B-52 Bombers.

Remember, this was 1967 and most of the Australian players were barely 23 years of age and most had never travelled overseas.

After Vietnam, Australia flew to Singapore for three more internationals that included New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia.

Australia on that tour played a total of 10 games, winning all 10.

And what pray did the Australian players receive as their winning bonuses for this long and historic tour?

Forget cash.

They were each allowed to keep their Australian track-suits instead of handing them back in to the then called, the Australian Soccer Federation.

How times have changed.

Today our Euro-based players travel Business Class both ways.

They get paid a bomb of cash to represent Australia, and in one or two cases, they have been allowed, (or been able), to pick and choose the games they want to play in.

One such player some weeks back, even laid down the law to Soccer Australia that he won't play for Australia if a certain promoter handles that international.

Seems like players have become masters.

That can't be right?

Surely.

❑❑❑❑

GHEORGHE HAGI, Romania's former wizard World Cup captain, recently appointed as that country's national coach, last Wednesday missed out on making a spectacular debut in his new career.

Gheorghe Hagi: Romania's new national coach rushed to hospital.

Romania was playing against Slovenia, but the hapless Hagi was rushed to hospital in Germany for an emergency kidney operation.

❑❑❑❑

THE NSW SOCCER FEDERATION will stage its Annual 'Gold Medal' Presentation Dinner for its Super League next month on Friday September 14th.

The lavish function will be held in the plush 'Sarah Grand Ballroom' at Le Montage in the inner Western suburb of Sydney, Leichhardt.

The official guests, players and coaches of the NSW Super League, Divisions 1,2,3 and 4 plus the Youth League and Cadet League, will all be entertained by 'Abbalanche and comedian Kenny Graham.

❑❑❑❑

THE LEICHHARDT TIGERS' energetic President, Mr Tony Raciti, last week found himself engaged in a tedious verbal volley-ball clash on the phone with one of his players.

Subject, (as always seems to be the case), money owing to the player from last season's NSW Premier League.

The telephonic dialogue went something like this:

Raciti: "You know our situation right now. Why are you still asking to be paid?"

Player: "Do you, or do you not, owe me $1,150?"

Raciti: "Of course we do. You know that, and our Club is not denying it at all?

"I've never argued we owe you nothing."

Player: "Have all the other players been paid their money?"

Raciti: "Yes they have, and you know that as well."

Player: "Well why not me?"

Raciti: "Because you, (as you well know), was our highest paid contract player."

Player: "Then why don't you pay me the balance?"

Raciti: "As I've told you repeatedly, we are very short right now of funds. But while I've got you on the phone, let me ask you a very simple question. Please.

"Why didn't you show our Club, on the pitch, during last season, the very same aggression and unyielding commitment that you are now showing in chasing the little money you're still owed?"

Player: Deafening silence at the other end of the line.

Some players today are really quick.

But in some cases, (not often though), some of our more astute Soccer administrators, can be even quicker.

Ironically, the moral of the above story is simply this.

Right now, a prominent coach in the NSL is chasing this 'committed and unyielding' player for the coming new season in the NSL.

Tony Raciti: President of the Leichhardt Tigers.

❑❑❑❑

URUGUAY's shock 2-0 loss in a World Cup qualifier last week at the hands of bottom placed Venezuela, greatly assisted Brazil's chances now of making the 'Top Four' in South America.

Brazil now sits in fourth spot, three clear points ahead of fifth placed Uruguay who are on 21 points.

Meanwhile struggling Brazil at long last got back on the winning track by downing second placed Paraguay 2-0 with the revelling Rivaldo scoring Brazil's second goal 20 minutes from the bell.

Rivaldo: Brazil's brilliant attacking midfielder.

These latest reults now surface Uruguay or Colombia as the likely lurking opponent that Australia must face come November 21st at the M.C.G.

❑❑❑❑

TONY POPOVIC late last week, at long last, was granted his British Work Permit that allowed him to sign up with England First Division side, Crystal Palace.

Tony Popovic: Transfer to Crystal Palace now finalised.

Having played with J-League side Sanfrecce Hiroshima for the past almost five seasons, Popovic had been experiencing complications with the Department of Employment in England which forced the lanky defender to pull out of the Australian squad that recently travelled to Japan.

❑❑❑❑

THE AUSTRALIAN FUTSAL (Five A Side) INDOOR SOCCER Youth teams will be touring New Zealand, Canada and Thailand this November/December.

The touring squads will be the Under 13s, 14s, 15s, 17s and 19s year old females.

❑❑❑❑

BOBBY ('John Wayne') CATLIN, Newcastle United's gentle giant goalie, has returned 'home' after four years absence, when recently snapped up by Marconi.

Catlin left Marconi four years ago to join Sydney Olympic for a season.

Marconi's coach, Lee Sterrey, and for the past three seasons coach at Newcastle, knows Catlin's sterling value better than anyone else.

When Sterrey was informed that Newcastle was no longer interested in Catlin, he moved in swiftly to snap him up.

With Marconi's David Aceski still in Yugoslavia on trials and his future uncertain with Marconi uncertain, Sterrey signed Catlin to have him at the very minimum as a back-up to the slender custodian, Michael Turnbull, as well as to coach all of the Club's goalkeepers.

Marconi this week is touring the Riverina region, taking in Wagga and Griffiths on a pre-season training tour during which the Sydney Club will play an exhibition match, most likely in Griffiths.

BOBBY ('John Wayne') CATLIN: Back at Marconi.

❑❑❑❑

LAST week Argentina following its sound 0-2 win over Ecuador, became the first South American nation to qualify for the Japan/Korea World Cup Finals next year.

It's now impossible for Argentina, (currently clear leaders in the10 South American nation tournament), to falter and miss out on Japan/Korea.

First half goals from mid-field-playmaker, Sebastian Veron and goal-ace Hernan Crespo, lifted the Argentines to victory.

JUAN-SEBASTIAN VERON: Manchester United's attacking midfielder.

❑❑❑❑

THE NORTHERN SPIRIT yesterday announced that it had received a valuable two year sponsorship deal from respected express courier, SNAPX.

The Spirit's Media manager, Mr David Mason, informed us:

"This major and significant cash sponsorship deal includes the front of the shirt position which will be emblazoned by the name 'SNAPX'.

"SNAPX is a national express courier organisation with its head office based in the heart of North Sydney.

"The deal was brokered by our Commercial Agents, Carnegie Sports International," stated Mr Mason.

ROBBIE TRAJKOVSKI: Newly signed by the Spirit.

SNAPX which was formerly known as 'Snap Express', has expanded its operations from a local service in the 80s to a comprehensive national network.

The Company's Managing Director, Mr Terry Mosse-Robinson, said: "We see the recognition gained through a partnership with the Northern Spirit as a valuable part of strengthening our market presence and exposure.'

The Northern Spirit kicks off its pre-season training this afternoon at its new training facility at Cromer Park, Dee Why.

CYC STANMORE SC HAWKS

STANMORE HAWKS
SOCCER CLUB

Applications are now invited for the following positions in the respective competitions:

NSW Super League

First Grade,
Under 21s and Under 18s

Youth League

Youth Development and Head Coach
Under 13, Under 14, Under 15 and Under 16
All Applicants must be experienced and accredited with
The NSW Soccer Federation.
APPLICATIONS CLOSE 4 SEPTEMBER 2001.

Applications in writing to the Secretary,
Stanmore Hawks Soccer Club
56-58 Stanmore Road, Stanmore 2048.
Enquiries S. Economides 9642-1781, 0419 686 569
Fax: 9516-1679

SYDNEY UNITED SOCCER CLUB

Coaching Staff Required for Sydney United Soccer Club

Super League teams for the following ages:-
11s, 12s, 13s, 14s, 15s & 17s

* Must have Level 2 Coaching Certificate as a minimum

Please forward written applications to:
Director of Coaching
Sydney United Soccer Club
223-227 Edensor Rd
Edensor Park NSW 2176

Applications must be received before 5pm, Monday 27 August

SUPER LEAGUE COACHES REQUIRED

SOCCER WOMAN BY JANENE MAR

Murray leads CyberRays into US League Final

Australia will be represented in Saturday's inaugural WUSA professional league final after the Bay Area CyberRays won their semifinal last weekend, a 3-2 victory over New York Power.

Australia has three representatives in the WUSA, all at the CyberRays — Olympians Julie Murray and the injured Dianne Alagich, plus former National Coach Tom Sermanni.

Murray, the club's leading scorer with nine goals during the regular season, stole the show once again in the must-win semifinal scoring two goals, including the late winner.

Sermanni played much more of a role in the win than planned, having to take charge on the bench after Head Coach Ian Sawyers was sent off at half time for 'abusive language' toward the referee.

Alagich, recovering from knee reconstruction surgery, sadly had to watch her teammates from the sidelines.

Murray opened the CyberRays account after just four minutes. A Sissi corner was headed on by Katia which found Murray free to head into goal. But the Power hit back immediately, equalising a minute later with a freekick by Emily Janss.

The home side regained the lead in the 40th minute after Katia was fouled at the edge of the box. Brandi Chastain stepped up to the spot to face goalkeeper Gao Hong, a dramatic rematch of the penalty which sealed the USA's 1999 World Cup final win over China.

But again New York came back with a quick response, drawing level in stoppage time before the break, Jennifer Lalor scoring from a direct freekick.

In the second half, the CyberRays outshot their opponents 10-2, but it wasn't until late in the match that they were able to find the back of the net, with the help of fresh substitute Megan Horvath up front.

Sissi's chip saw Horvath cut the ball back to the unmarked Murray who headed home the winning goal from the far post.

So to Foxboro Stadium in Boston on the US east coast where they face Atlanta Beat. In their semifinal, the Beat came from behind to overcome fourth-placed Philadelphia Charge in extra-time to win 3-2, Cindy Parlow the golden goal scorer.

Atlanta is the only team Bay Area has never beaten, the Beat with the upper hand after two wins and a draw.

The two teams finished with equal points at the top of the WUSA ladder, but Atlanta were deemed first on the countback.

Bay Area began this inaugural season by playing in the very first WUSA match, a loss to Washington Freedom.

In between, the CyberRays followed up a slow start to stage an incredible ten-match unbeaten streak which lifted them to equal top of the ladder.

Now to be playing off for the inaugural professional crown is a stunning achievement, and a dream which will hopefully be realised for our Aussie trio.

Bay Area CyberRays' and Aussie International Julie Murray celebrates after scoring the winning goal against the New York Power in their WUSA semifinal game, over the weekend.

HAMPTON ROADS IN W-1 SEMI-FINAL

Hampton Roads Piranhas, American team of Matildas Kelly Golebiowski and Amy Taylor, finished equal third in the W-1 League National Championship last weekend.

The Piranhas participated in the four-team, two-day championship playoffs as the hosts, chosen largely due to their magnificent home ground the Virginia Beach Sportsplex, considered one of the best in the entire USL.

Hampton Roads finished second in the Eastern Conference, and therefore would have played off for the right to contest these finals on their own merit.

In Friday night's semifinal, they faced Western Conference champions Vancouver Breakers, a team boasting no less than ten Canadian senior and youth internationals. But the Piranhas immediately took the game to the sluggish Breakers who were still recovering from a twelve-hour flight the previous day.

Hampton Roads, even without US striker Christie Welsh, fired eight shots to their opponents' one for the first half. But they found themselves up against an in-form Nicci Wright, Canada's national team goalkeeper, who feats included stopping three breakaway chances.

With no goals after ninety minutes, the decider went to extra-time. Towards the end of the first period, Canadian international Andrea Neil scored from a direct freekick into the top right corner of the net to give Vancouver the win, and dash the dreams of the two Aussies. Northern Conference champions Boston Renegades comfortably defeated Eastern frontrunners Maryland Pride 3-0 in the other semi-final.

Due then to play in the third-placed playoff against rivals Maryland Pride less than 24 hours later on the Saturday night, a severe storm caused a long delay to proceedings.

One attempt was made to get the game underway, but lasted less than two minutes before being abandoned, and the two were declared equal third.

After a two and a half hour delay, the final eventually kicked off at around 10pm before almost an empty stadium.

The Boston Renegades ran away with the title with a 5-1 thrashing over the Vancouver Breakers.

GOLEBIOWSKI WINS W-1 AWARD

Matildas' Olympian striker Kelly Golebiowski was named winner of the W-1 League Rookie of the Year award on the eve of the playoff series last Thursday night. The presentation was made during the W-1 Championship Banquet at the Norfolk Waterside Marriott, close to her adopted home.

The 20-year-old New South Welshman has certainly thrived in this her first season overseas, helping the Piranhas to second place on the ladder in this only their second season in the top flight.

Over the 14-week season, she was the Hampton Roads Piranhas' leading player with 21 points and 9 goals for the season. These statistics, which included one hattrick and a bicycle kick, also ranked her fifth in the league on points and equalthird highest goalscorer.

WOLLONGONG WOLVES

YOUTH LEAGUE COMPETITION 2002 SEASON

COACHING POSITIONS

Applications are now being invited from suitably qualified Coaches for Winter Season 2002.

Premier Youth League

Grades: U11s, 12s, 13s, 14s, 15s & 17s
Minimum qualifications
Grades U11s & U12s Intermediate Licence.
Grades U13s, U14s, U15s & U17s Senior Licence.

Applications in writing outlining playing & coaching experience along with Australian Coaching Council Identification Number should be forwarded to-

Dennis Trevor
Secretary
32 Hall Drive, Menai 2234
Phone: 0409 660 929
Applications close Tuesday 31st August 2001.

Youth Profile

Alex Wilkinson: A Joey with Spirit

By Mark Stavroulakis

Like so many National League sides, Northern Spirit has focused immensely on youth prospects for the future of their club. One prominent player currently at the club is Australian U17 international Alexander Wilkinson.

Young Alex started his footballing career at Gladesville Hornsby, where it was there people realized this young man's ability as being a consistent defender.

"I spent four good seasons at the club, starting from the U13's and finishing with U16's. The club treated me well, and I experienced no problems there. Overall it was a great place to learn and I know it was a stepping stone towards my soccer career," said Alex.

The young stopper was awarded 'Club Captain' for his loyalty to the club, and it was something the youngster was really proud of.

"Being in the U16's at that time and getting the role of Club Captain was great. It was one of many ways in which the club showed its appreciation towards their players," said Wilkinson.

'Wilko's National Youth League career started really early as at the tender age of 15, he played fifteen games for the Northern Spirit Colts side.

Alex Wilkinson:

Yet another achievement followed young Alex's club captaincy and that was being selected for the U16 NSW state side. "I was really shocked about being selected as it was an unexpected call-up. However, I thrived on playing for my state and was really proud of putting on a NSW jersey. We did really well in the Nationals, but unfortunately lost in the final 1-0 to Queensland," said the NSW star.

It was at these Nationals, selectors for the up and coming U17 Australian squad were present. At the conclusion of the Nationals in '2000, a training camp was to be held straight after the tournament, consisting of 30 players who excelled during the Titles. Alex was one of the thirty chosen, and ever since his first selection, Wilkinson has fared in the Australian U17 team since.

After being involved in every U17 Joey selection, Alex was chosen as one of the twenty boys to take part in the U17 World Cup Finals in Trinidad & Tobago, held in September. Throughout his short international success, young 'Wilko' has impressed many people following the Joeys progress. "We have come a long way from the beginning of the selections to now as a team. We have trained many times, and now we know each other's game play. It was a huge honor for myself playing my first international match for Australia in the Oceania Qualifiers. It was a life long dream to do such a thing and playing for the Green and Gold was awesome," said the Epping Boys student.

Honors seem to be second nature to young 'Wilko' as he is currently Vice-Captain of the Joeys squad. "To be captain or vice-captain of any international side is a huge honor and I'll do all that I can to fulfill that role," said the Joeys star.

The U17 World Cup is getting closer, and young Alex predicts big things for the Australian side, even though punters have pitted the side in the 'Group of Death'.

"Our group will be strong with champions Brazil and hosts Trinidad, but in soccer, anything can happen. We have a good mix of players and I know all the boys will do their best in representing Australia," said Alex.

The 17-year-old has been capped seven times for Australia and will surely increase that margin after the World Cup Finals conclude.

Alex is currently contracted with the Northern Spirit, but at the moment is discussing new contract terms with the club. "At the moment I'm negotiating whether to sign as an apprentice or as a youth player again.

The thought of playing overseas football is something young 'Wilko' would love to do and that chance has been there for the youngster, with a huge Italian club keeping a close eye on him. "It was the end of our League season this year, a handful of players were selected to represent NSW in Italy for the Gardisca Tournament. It was a terrific experience as we were playing against top-sides from around the globe, it was a real eye opener.

With so many influences on young Alex's career so far, it's been his parents (Rob & Caroline) that have been his main support over the years. "I really owe them a lot as they have taken their time out in taking me to soccer matches as a youngster. They have always been there for me and no doubt I'll repay them some day," said 'Wilko'.

Anywhere Soccer takes us, is home

— Liz Trajkovski, wife of Northern Spirit star, Robert

By Daniela Raco

Their travels have taken them from their hometown of Melbourne, across the Nullarbor, and most recently to the Habour City.

Contrary to rumors that Robert Trajkovski is jet-setting across the globe in search of a new club, he has officially been snapped up by Northern Spirit and has made Sydney his new home...for the time being.

Playing the doting Dad, Robert enjoys some quality time with his daughter Tahlia, while his wife Elizabeth takes some 'time out' to give *ABSW* the lowdown on Robert's golf prowess, his resemblance to George Clooney, and his endless supply of hair and beauty products!!

Where did you meet?

We met at the Altona Gate Soccer Presentation Night about eleven years ago. I went along with my brother who played in the junior competition at the time. Robert and I have been married now for five years.

Was it love at first sight?

No!! He was a nice person, but it was a matter of lost phone numbers.

Do you have an understanding of the game?

I think so. I would update my father-in-law on the progress of games when Robert played in Perth.

QUICK QUIZ

What position does Robert play?

Right-Wing-Back.

What is the off-side rule?

If a player kicks the ball to a teammate, and he receives the ball in front of the other team.

Who are the key players in the side?

Robert Trajkovski, Lou Acevski, Robert Enes, Adrian Cervinski, Craig Foster, and Pablo Cardozo.

Will Northern Spirit be Championship contenders this season?

Yes, they have to be. They'll finish in the top two, and Robert will score at least three goals. He's likely to set up more than he scores.

I hear Soccer Australia is revamping their board. Perhaps they could benefit from your Soccer wisdom.

Well I believe players should be number one, and not behind the scenes.

There seems to be a little bit of confusion about Robert's whereabouts. I have read reports that he is holidaying in Melbourne, yet other sightings have him jet-setting in Europe looking for another club. Perhaps he's in the Caribbean. Can you tell us his location and activities right at this moment?

I've also heard the rumors. Everybody has been calling. At this very moment Robert is in Sydney, sitting in the lounge room with a full stomach, next to Lou Acevski and they're watching 'Everybody Loves Raymond'.

Are you looking forward to the 2001-2002 season?

Elizabeth Trajkovski (left) with her heartthrob Robert.

Yes, I'll be at all their home games, and hope to watch a few Melbourne games.

You have a 4-year-old daughter named Tahlia. Does she recognize Dad on the Soccer pitch?

Yes. She calls out 'Daddy' and waves.

Are you planning to have your own Soccer team?

No, definitely not.

In the last couple of years Robert's Soccer career has taken you right across Australia. Where do you call home?

Wherever I am at this moment. Perth was beautiful and warm, and both our families are in Melbourne.

Do you find that the constant traveling and relocating is unsettling?

Yes. It's harder now that we have a child, and will be become even more difficult when she starts school. Schools often require that you express your interest in enrolment with them from when the child is a young age.

Are you Robert's harshest critic?

No. People have a bad day, and I don't harp on it.

Robert's not known for his bad-boy behavior on the pitch. Do you caution him about any on-field biffo?

No, it's his job. Hopefully he'll make good judgments.

Is he the first or last to leave the change rooms after a game?

He used-to-be the last. It's getting better. He is definitely not the first.

What animal (or thing) best describes his personality?

A lion, because he is a typical Leo. He likes to sit and look pretty.

Rate Robert's Soccer skills out of 10:

10/10 — he has been playing long enough.

Are you the typical 'glamour' wife of a Soccer player?

I like to look nice.

Describe Robert's dress sense. Is he the glamour queen?

He definitely takes good care of himself. He won't have a hair out of place, and has a supply of beauty and hair products in his toiletry bag.

Does he worry about his image in public (as a role model, or how he rates in the fashion stakes)?

He loves the brand 'Colorado', and top-to-toe he has to look his best.

What's Robert's view on sex before a game?

No, definitely not!!

What is Robert's favorite conversation topic?

Everything and anything. He is quite easy-going, and tends to only talk Soccer with his mates.

Does Robert have any hidden talents (that you can share with us)?

He loves his golf, and plays any chance he gets.

Does he have any bad habits?

Too many to mention.

What famous person has he been told he looks like?

George Clooney

Describe Robert's idea of a perfect night out?

A game of golf!! Actually dinner — on our last wedding anniversary we went to the 'Tram Restaurant', which is a French restaurant in Melbourne.

How would Robert spend his last $50?

Buy a present for Tahlia.

What is the biggest misconception about sportsmen?

Everyone thinks they are untouchable and not real people.

Complete this sentence 'Love is ..... wonderful.

What is the first thing he does when he arrives home?

Puts his bag down, gives Tahlia and I both a kiss hello, lowers the T.V (usually Tahlia's watching The Wiggles), and sits on the couch.

What's the best (or perhaps worst) excuse he has used for missing training?

He has never missed training.

What gourmet cuisines can Robert whip up in the kitchen?

Pasta and cheese. I'm usually the gourmet chef.

Is their a spunky NSL player that would top Cleo's Most Eligible Bachelor list?

Clint Bolton — it's his stunning eyes.

Who controls the remote control?

We have two TVs. We each have our own, so it's not an issue.

Describe Robert's mood after a bad game?

He is very quiet, and doesn't show much emotion.

Does Robert follow any pre-match rituals?

He has his carbohydrates (pasta), drinks plenty of water, and has early nights.

Does he have a favorite meal?

Steak — he loves his meat.

Is there a downside of being a 'football widow'?

After having had Tahlia it's not so bad, as she occupies most of my time. I also spend time with friends, and shopping has become a pastime.

The Trajkovskis: Elizabeth and Robert with their 4-year-old daughter Tahlia.

How do you react when fans yell abuse at your main man?

I try not to react. Everyone has their own opinion.

Have you got a mean right hook?

Oh yeah!!

Robert Trajkovski: On duty for his estwhile Club, Perth Glory.

PARRAMATTA EAGLES
SOCCER ACADEMY

PLAYERS TRIALS

NSW SUPER YOUTH & SUPER CADET LEAGUES

Parramatta Eagles Soccer Academy, in conjunction with Manchester United Football Club, invite players to trial for it's teams which will compete in the New South Wales Super Youth & Super Cadet Leagues for Season 2002.
Age groups mentioned below are for Season 2002.
Trials to be held at Everley Park, Everley Road, Chester Hill, NSW.

Under 11	9.00 am	Sunday 26th August and Sunday 2nd September
Under 12	11.00 am	Sunday 26th August and Sunday 2nd September
Under 13	1.00 pm	Sunday 26th August and Sunday 2nd September
Under 14	3.00 pm	Sunday 26th August and Sunday 2nd September
Under 15	6.30pm	Monday 27th August and Monday 3rd September

Trials to be held at Ray Marshall Reserve, Erle Street, South Granville, NSW.

Under 17	6.30 pm	Monday 27th August and Monday 3rd September

Players should be at the ground 30 minutes before trial commencement time.
Additional trial sessions will be added if required.
Please call John Curran, Chief Scout, Parramatta Eagles Soccer Academy on 0405 148 254 to confirm your place in the trials.

OFFICIAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PARTNER OF MANCHESTER UNITED IN OCEANIA

Last week's defeat by Japan was in contrast to Australia's previous visit to the Land of the Rising Sun during the Confederations' Cup in June.

Letters to the Editor

Japanese Farce poorly-timed

Dear Sir,

It came as no surprise to see a second string Australian team embarrassingly go down to the fully fit Japanese outfit last week.

And wasn't it Basil Scarscella who infamously stated that Australia shouldn't play 'poor' teams like Japan.

The match was an absolute farce and a complete waste of time and money, and these are the reasons why:

1. The Australian team that played was second rate (no disrespect intended) and will largely not feature in the final make-up of the World Cup squad.

2. The Japanese team are fully fit and have just come off their domestic season, unlike the Australians.

3. The match could not possibly serve any purpose for our World Cup campaign for the above reasons, except of course to embarrass the 'green and gold' as well as sap confidence and momentum gained from the Confederations Cup.

So why play this game at all?

Well lets ignore how poor the timing of this fixture is at such a crucial stage of the World Cup campaign, the concept is certainly a sound idea and an important 'olive branch' to our neighbours up north.

We should enjoy this series in future years to come but what I want to know is why start it now?

I'm sure 'brownie' points have been gained in the eye of the Asian Football Confederation (especially Japan), at a cost of course to the Australian game. Very politically sound Soccer AustraliaÖ but I'm sure Frank Farina will argue it gives him a last chance to look at these fringe players.

Well to be 'Frank', if you don't know the make-up of the World Cup squad at this point in time I fear for our qualification aspirations.

Come-on Farina, you knew this was the likely outcome of such a fixture and it is important for you as our 'messiah' to stand-up and say "No I will not make a mockery of the Australian team for political purposes, I was employed to ensure Australia qualifies for the World Cup, that is all."

Andrew Whyte
Knoxfield, VIC.

New broom, new hope for Soccer

Dear Sir,

Let's hope that now a new broom has been put through the Soccer Australia organisation, that positions on the board are found for former Socceroo players and not just former politicians.

Someone like Johnny Warren with his vast knowledge of different football cultures around the world would be a natural before he gets any older.

His knowledge and experience has been wasted over the past 20 years or more, due to the fact that he has justifiably criticised the hierarchy in power all the time.

Well now there is no excuse anymore in leaving Johnny Warren out in the cold.

As for bringing in former Olympic minister Michael Knight is concerned, that would be a good idea if we are chasing the 2010 world cup finals for Australia when it is announced in 2004.

Ian Knop: Soccer Australia chairman.

However unless we know that we have an even chance of snaring the 2010 World Cup from South Africa, (not impossible considering the increase in all forms of crime over there), then he may not be needed.

But with his experience in organising a successful Sydney Olympic's, provided we qualify for next years World Cup in Japan and Korea, I personally think we stand a better than even chance of hosting the 2010 World Cup finals, if we can win over the Asian's and European delegates to our course.

Both South Africa and Brazil have enormous political and economic problems, not to mention security problems for fans and tourists alike.

That's what Ian Knop and Nick Greiner have to look at in hiring someone like Michael Knight.

Let's just wait and see what happens in November first, before worrying about Michael Knight.

Dominic Scullino,
Nerang. QLD

Curious happenings at Cosmos

Dear Sir,

I want the Canberra Cosmos people to come out of hiding and talk to the players that they know ... and ask the players what they feel is happening at training.

Imagine, a player of Steve Martin's quality was let go ... what a joke !

If the new, imported-coach is calling the shots and everything is okay... why are Cosmos considering making further changes to the coaching staff even before the start of the new season?

I will also like to ask more questions and also get some answers from this "open board" at Cosmos.

Why are some players being chucked-out by a player-manager while he is at the same time, Alzamendi's right-hand man ?

If Alzamendi is really calling the shots, why are some players, who are obvious to all-and-sundry, not upto NSL standard, being kept on, while others are sent away?

Why is one Sydney-based player agent, Chris Tanner so furious that his client, Shane Lyons has been sent packing by Alzamendi?

Looks like there is more to the situation than we are allowed to know.

Even in the board, there seems to be chaos. If not, why has pro-Alzamendi director Jeff Konstantinou resigned ? Is it getting hot in the kitchen ?

If Alzamendi has allowed his selection process to be polluted, why is he still hanging around?

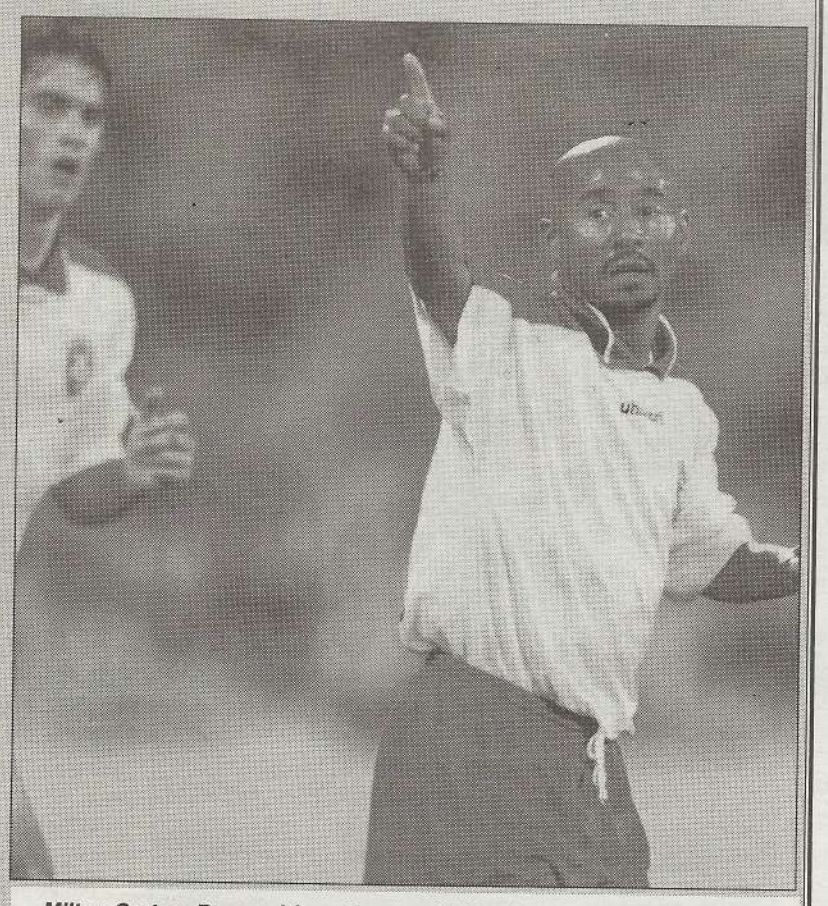
Even his credentials now appear questionable. Did he really handle a clubside in Uruguay ?

Why, with 8 weeks to go, has Alzamendi not signed a contract ? Does he have a work permit to work in Australia?

There is also talk of several players being managed by Alzamendi's right-hand. Who is this guy and what interest does he have in Cosmos?

Methinks it's time the Cosmos board led by Chris Dillon come out to address all the questions cos Canberrans will not fold their arms and watch a club which they fought tooth-and-nail for despite Soccer Australia hostility, to be dragged into ruin by faceless foreign "messiahs".

Pierlugi Morlando,
Jervis Bay, ACT



Milton Cortes: Dropped from the new 2001-2 Canberra Cosmos Squad, along with promising youngsters, Shane Lyons.

Good job, John!

Dear Sir,

I have been a reader of your publication for a number of years and I always read with much interest your 'Chief Writer' Mr John Economos' write ups.

I would like to congratulate him on his editorial piece on (August 7, 2001, page 3).

It was an excellent piece of journalism. It was hard hitting and most informative and reflected, I'm sure, the opinion of the general public in Australia Soccer.

We don't need politicians running our game.

We need alot more pieces like that from Mr John Economos.

Well done. Good job, John.

Bill Diakos,
Sydney, NSW.

OFF THE CROSSBAR

By Allan Crisp

TV OR NOT TV?

Soccer Australia's new bosses have not allowed the grass to grow beneath their feet since being given the green light to revive the game's sagging image.

Within the first nine days of his tenure, new chairman Ian Knop has moved with commendable speed by implementing sweeping changes.

The buzz-words used were, democracy and transparency, as the internal structure was overhauled by replacing the NSL executive with an NSL Members Commission.

The essential difference is that under the executive only seven clubs were represented, while under the new system, each club will have a voice.

In his post election interview Knop only allowed himself time to grab his new broom before identifying television as one of his major reform priorities.

But, while changes on the TV front could be forthcoming, let's not expect Channel 7 to supply NSL weekly live, prime time broadcasts this season.

The disastrous 2000/2001 season, when Carlton and Eastern Pride crashed was, after all, just a mark-time exercise while we eagerly awaited the new age 12-team competition.

The existing product on offer failed to ignite corporate interest, apart from that in Western Australia, where Perth Glory had several matches beamed direct by Channel 7.

Elsewhere, the game generally stagnated with the dwindling attendance figures of last season likely to be duplicated this season.

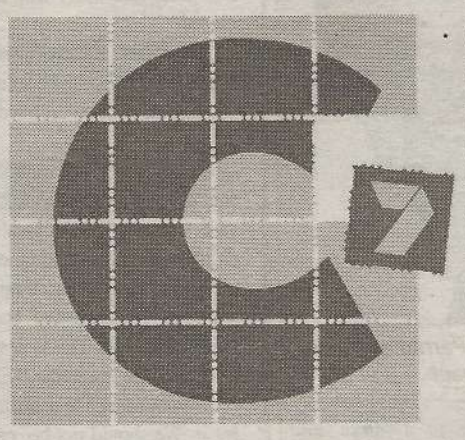
So, it seems we must continue to march to the same slow beat.

Pessimists would perhaps say that the NSL competition could, not so much be slow marching, but simply running on the spot.

However, the eternal optimists among us would rather predict that this season could be a blockbuster with exciting young talent getting their chance to shine on Australia's top domestic stage.

Sadly, this prospect will not mean that Channel 7, as the official Soccer Australia broadcaster, will be moved to present soccer as a major attraction during season 2001/2002.

There has been talk of a Sunday morning NSL preview program on Channel 7, a prospect welcomed publicly by SBS commentator Johnny Warren, who suggested his channel might consider shifting the timeslot of its "On The Ball" program to avoid a clash.



As for the replays, we can expect more midnight highlight packages on free to air TV, simply because the product will be no better, or worse, than last season.

Channel 7's Adelaide Pty Limited publicity manager Meno Toutsidis summed up the situation neatly when he said that having a Channel 7 representative on the Soccer Australia board would not influence programming decisions.

"It wouldn't matter is Kerry Stokes was on the board if the league is as it is today," Toutsidis said.

"Kerry Stokes doesn't make decisions just because he likes a particular sport, he programs it as a business.

"Every program, be it sport or drama has to survive on its merit — they must rate or be axed.

"As far as the national league goes, it has to be corrected by the people in charge.

It might take 18-months, or it might take three years, or it may take longer.

"I personally don't think it will take as long because the new group of people are hell bent on changing the league — not in terms of dumping clubs, but certainly transforming the league.

"And if that means more teams like Perth Glory, then fine. "I believe there's no doubt that the influence of Nick Tana will be quite profound.

"He (Tana) has had a rather muted voice previously, due to political reasons and divisions and all sorts of things, but I believe he will emerge as a powerful voice and a voice in sync with Soccer Australia.

Ante Kovacevic (left): Trialling with German club.

OVERSEAS TOURISTS

"Our overseas tourists are slowly coming back." So said Adelaide City Force coach Zoran Matic last week when his first choice goalkeeper Adrian Cagalj returned from England.

However, blossoming youngster Mario Karlovic still is trialling in Italy, while key defender Ante Kovacevic has a futher week of an agreed period left to continue training in Germany with a second division club, and striker Kosta Salapasidis is trialling in Greece.

Meanwhile, Claudio Pelosi looks certain to leave the Adelaide club he has served so manfully for two seasons.

And the dispute with Bradley Hassell remains unresolved, while City captain Aurelio Vidmar and the club are exchanging faxes in an attempt to reach an agreement on contract terms.

Matic said he was on the verge of procuring three, "highly credentialled players," to bolster his squad.

A breach of contract claim by Hassell has been disputed by Adelaide City, which says it offered a cheque that was rejected by the player.

NSL CLUBS CLASH IN SA

Adelaide fans are in for an NSL preview treat next month when Parramatta Power and Perth Glory clash at Camden Reserve.

The big game will feature big names when former Adelaide City champions Alex Tobin (Parramatta) and Damian Mori (Glory) will be battling rivals on Saturday, September 8.

The following night, SA State League champions Birkalla will tackle Parramatta at the same venue.

Reigning SA Premier League champions Blue Eagles will play Perth Glory at Marden Sports Complex on Friday, September 7.

4, 4, 4, 3: DIAL-A-CHAMP

The SA Premier League is still in progress, but Blue Eagles striker Michael Brooks has already broken his record goalscoring tally of 27-goals established last season with the Eagles.

Brooksie eclipsed his record when he rammed home his 28th goal of the current campaign against Port Pirie Spirit in a round 20 clash.

He began his whirlwind spree with an astonishing eight goals in the first three matches of the season, netting four in the opening match against Port Lion Pirates and another four goal haul in the third game versus Metro Stars.

While some strikers don't net four goals in a single match in a lifetime of endeavour, Brooks bagged his third four-goal tally of the season in round eight against Playford Patriots as Blue Eagles won 7-1.

Remarkably, he scored just one genuine hat-trick when he belied the unlucky 13 theory in round 13 against last season's beaten grand finalist Modbury Jets.

Brooksie's longest goal drought of the season spanned two games only twice during the fruitful season. During both "dry spells" his team-mates must have considered sending him get well cards.

And, he also has six West End Federation Cup goals to his credit, with the final still to come.

Despite his incredible consistency, Brooks has a long way to go to equal the all-time SA First Division record of 40 goals in a single season set by Malcolm Dunbar with Cumberland United in 1943.

More about "Marvellous Malcolm" and his amazing career in next weeks ABSW.

Allan Crisp can be heard on the 5RPH (1197AM) Marshall Thompson/Pacific Real Estate Breakfast Soccer Show each Tuesday from 7am-8.30am, along with Croydon Kings coach Phil Scardigno, Peter Millar, The Advertiser Soccer writer Meno Toutsidis and producer Robbie Popplestone.

Former Australian international John Perin and Crisp return for the 5RPH SOS (Soccer On Sunday) program each Sabbath from 8.30am-9.30am to present the latest local, overseas and interstate news, information and interviews.

Valeri not keen on Euro move yet

While argument continues over whether the likes of Harry Kewell and Mark Viduka should put the needs of the Socceroos above their club commitments, for Canberra's Carl Valeri it is not an issue.

The Joeys captain plans to put any ideas of playing in Europe on hold until after the Under-17 World Championship next month ñ even though he is being courted by Italian giant Inter Milan.

Valeri, the son of former Socceroo and Canberra icon Walter Valeri, had a trial with Inter in July, and they want him back.

But the youngster says he is putting all his mental and physical energies into playing for Australia, leaving it to his manager to negotiate a contract beginning after the World Championships are over.

Carl Valeri

However, he admits to being delighted at the interest Inter have shown and said it was a lifelong ambition to play in the country from where his family originated.

And he paid tribute to the Australian system that has allowed him to develop his talents. "Inter had heard about the Australian captaincy and I think that is what first gave them the idea I might be a decent player," he said.

South Australia Premier League Results

ROUND 21

PREMIER LEAGUE

Modbury Jets	0	Playford Patriots	0
Adelaide City	2	Campbelltown	0
(Saraceno, Deegan)			
White City Warriors	1	Raiders	0
(Hinic)			
Metro Stars	2	Croydon Kings	0
(Schimizzi, Sordillo)			
Port Lion	1	Port Pirie Spirit	0
(Mechis)			
Blue Eagles	2	Olympic FC	0
(Brooks, Sergi)			

STATE LEAGUE

Western Strikers	0	Hills Hawks	2
		(Harvey, Kay)	
Seaford Surfers	1	Cumberland Foxes	1
(Paay)		*(Patterson)*	
Northern Demons	7	Panthers	1
(Salvenemi 2, K. Alagich, Cerrachio, Gadaleta, Kolovinos, Fascinano)		*(Mather)*	
Salisbury Apaches	0	Para Hills Knights	0
Cobras	1	Enfield Falcons	2
(Bilandzic)		*(Rechichi, Waller)*	
Birkalla	5	Noarlunga Bulldogs	0
(McGregor 2, Tsekinis 2, Westervelt)			

ROUND 22

PREMIER LEAGUE

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25

Adelaide City v Blue Eagles
Olympic FC v Port Lion
Port Pirie Spirit v Modbury Jets
Playford Patriots v Metro Stars
Croydon Kings v White City
Raiders v Campbelltown Red Devils

STATE LEAGUE

Western Strikers v Birkalla
Noarlunga United v Cobras
Enfield Falcons v Salisbury Apaches
Para Hills Knights v Northern Demons
Cumberland Foxes v Hills Hawks

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

West End Federation Cup Final

Blue Eagles v Playford Patriots

Milton Cortes (left): Dropped from Cosmos' squad for the new season, by fellow-Uruguayan coach.

Aggrieved Dandenong stir-up relegation war

By Bert van Bedaf

THERE just might be a sting in the tail at season's end of the Victorian Premier League that proved such a triumph for Heidelberg United and heartbreak for Port Melbourne.

The Bergers clinched their first championship in a decade, beating the

Sharks 4-3 on penalties, when the score was still locked 2-2 after 110 minutes of grand final play.

But the final drama may yet be played out in the courts, if Dandenong Thunder stays determined to fight its relegation to division one of the State League after a single season in the top division.

The Thunder joined the Essendon Royals in a return to the lower league, but the contrast between the two sides, who also were promoted together last season, could not be starker.

Mark Silic: Bone of contention.

Whereas the bottom Royals sank without a win and three draws for three points, the Thunder departed the top flight on an unprecedented 27 points from seven hard-won victories, six draws and nine losses.

They just lost out to St Albans Saints, who finished third bottom on 29 points - and there's the rub. In round three against the Thunder, St Albans fielded former national league player Mark Silic, who it had signed the previous week.

It all seemed in order. Silic had been registered with the Victorian Soccer Federation and the former Melbourne Knights player seemed fine to stay at Churchill Reserve for the season. The Thunder lost the match 3-1.

Then came the surprising back-flip by the VSF. After further investigation with Soccer Australia, the VSF learned Silic had made five NSL appearances prior to his registration with NSL club Sydney United.

The VSF rules state during the transfer period players can move from an NSL club to a VPL club provided they have played no more than four NSL games. Clearly, Silic had exceeded his quota.

As soon as the VSF found out, it de-registered Silic. At the time VSF chief executive Geoff Miles readily admitted there "had been a mistake", which was corrected as soon as it had become known.

Dandenong did not lodge a complaint all those months ago, but having been relegated, the club astutely has decided it's worth appealing against the result.

The Thunder wants the result reversed, since St Albans fielded an "ineligible player". If successful, it would mean the club ends up with 30 points to stay in the premier league, while the Saints would drop to the State League on 26 points in second bottom spot.

Dandenong's "high performance" manager and coach Samson Elmazi is not joking. His earlier approaches to the VSF were politely cast aside. During the grand final at Bob Jane stadium on August 12, Miles told The Leader that he believed the VSF had dealt adequately with the issue and the case was closed.

But Miles already might have been aware that Elmazi had consulted a solicitor and sent him "a letter of opinion", which outlined the club's legal course of action.

Elmazi said Miles wanted to talk to him at Bob Jane stadium, but he said he told Miles to "f-off" and "the case was now in the hands of the solicitors and he (Miles) should be talking to them".

"We've sent a letter of opinion to (Geoff) Miles. We want the result reversed, because St Albans played an ineligible player. This is destined to go to the Supreme Court and we are going," Elmazi said.

"Some-one made a mistake and should be paying for it. We should not be paying for it. Miles and the VSF should have a hard look at themselves," he said. Elmazi said the club had also written to FIFA, the world ruling body.

Miles however said he believed "there was no need to consult the federation solicitors". "We made a mistake at the time. We admitted that and corrected it. Dandenong didn't appeal then," Miles said at the VPL final.

Silic, meanwhile, has long since left St Albans and is currently playing in Germany. But the case doesn't appear to be closed, yet.

Alzamendi axes kinsman Cortes

By Graham Cooke

The controversy surrounding Canberra Cosmos continued last week, with two prominent members of last season's squad told by new coach Antonio Alzamendi that they were not part of his plans.

First to go was Uruguayan import Milton Cortes, a crowd favourite responsible for turning the club's fortunes in several games last season after coming off the bench. Also affected was local-boy Shane Lyons who was dropped from the 2001-2002 squad by Alzamendi.

There has however been continuing doubts about Cortes' ability to play a full game, and the Cosmos coach has decided the club cannot afford the luxury of his countryman in only a substitute's role, however effective.

Matters threatened to become unpleasant when Cortes at first claimed he had already been given a contract by former chairman Danny Moulis, but he later agreed that although one had been offered, he had rejected it.

Players now under consideration by Alzamendi include Paul Wearne, from Bankstown City Lions. A former player who may be making a late bid for the coach's attention is Naoki Imaya, who is returning to Australia after a series of trials in Japan.

Meanwhile Canberra Cosmos continues to be the subject of off-field rumours, with the latest suggesting a major involvement from a Sydney investor.

... as Giannasca rejoins Belconnen

By Graham Cooke

Belconnen Blue Devils have re-signed captain Anthony Giannasca for the NSW Premier League season, killing any possibility the experienced goalkeeper will prolong his NSL career with Canberra Cosmos.

Giannasca was last season recalled to the Cosmos by former coach Mike Milovanovic after completing his duties with Belconnen and played an important role in the club's late-season success.

However, Cosmos coach Antonio Alzamendi has the club's two other goalkeepers from the 2000-01 campaign, Barney Smith and Angelo Konstantinou, in training.

Giannasa is the Blue Devils' first signing for the coming season and coach Lino Fiorese said it was an essential step on the road to putting together a competitive team.

"To be successful, we need key positions filled by top players and Tony will be one of the standouts again this season," he predicted.

"Also his leadership has proved to be invaluable to the side and this is important as we bring through the younger players."

Tony Giannasca.

The competition kicks off in mid-October and Fiorese said he planned an intensive build-up, culminating in a series of pre-season friendlies against under Premier League clubs.

He also predicted that Belconnen would have some interstate players to complement their line up which last year was drawn almost exclusively from the ACT Premiership.

Parramatta kick-off pre-season tour

Parramatta Power will kick-off its pre-season country tour on Friday, 24 August when a contingent of players and officials heads to Orange. The three-day tour will also see the Power play in Lithgow before returning to Parramatta on Monday 27 August.

"It's good to go out there and promote the game in the region," Head Coach David Mitchell said. "There are a lot of good kids who have followed soccer and it's good to take the game to them. It's also an opportunity to take the young kids in the squad away with the first team and see how we operate in a training camp situation."

Mitchell said pre-season training was running according to plan. He added players still had a lot of work to do to achieve full match fitness.

The blue-and-gold meanwhile, played their first pre-season game last Saturday, 18 August against Parramatta Melita Eagles at Melita Stadium. First grade kick-off was at 3pm with Youth League at 1pm.

David Mitchell: Parramatta's chief coach.

Squad heading to Orange and Lithgow: David Barrett, Peter Bennett, Damien Brown, Mark Byrnes, Steve Eagleton, Ahmad Elrich, Steve Fitzsimmons, Brad Groves, Matt Langdon, Lubo Lapsansky, Wayne O'Sullivan, Nick Orlic, Les Pogliacomi, Liam Reddy, Luke Roodenburg, Matt Thompson, Alex Tobin, Matt Biggins, Andrew Carman, Vincent Ripepi, Peter Gavaghan, Patrick Carrera, Blake Oliver and Jamie Johnston.

Farina happy to avoid Brazil

Australia's national chief coach, Frank Farina expressed obvious delight last week with the outcome of games in the South American World Cup qualifying group with Brazil beating Paraguay 2-0 in their latest World Cup qualifier while Uruguay suffered a shock 2-0 loss to Venezuela.

"I'm very, very happy. It didn't go according to plan I think for Uruguay but I'll be looking very closely at the Colombia result against Peru now.

"I hope they don't get a result because that will keep Uruguay in fifth spot and realistically they are the team that we would prefer to meet. Only for the reasons of travel and playing at sea level".

Farina confirmed that the squad he selects to face World and European Champions France in November in a much-hyped friendly, will go on to meet the fifth-placed South American team for a 2002 World Cup berth.

"The France game is the real preparation (for the World Cup qualifiers). None of the boys will be going back to their clubs after the France game so whoever is in that squad will be in the squad for the South American qualifiers".

Frank Farina

Venezuelan Juan Arango (centre) celebrates his goal against Uruguay during a 2002 World Cup qualifying match last week, in a result welcomed by Farina.

CORICA'S STRIKE PLANTS HIROSHIMA ATOP J-LEAGUE

Australian star Stephen Corica shrugged off his national team's midweek defeat to Japan by grabbing an early winner which lifted Sanfrecce Hiroshima to the top of the J-League.

The 28-year-old midfielder was on the pitch when the Socceroos crashed to Japan 3-0 in a friendly last Wednesday but he did not take long to put his disappointment behind him over the weekend.

Corica needed only a minute to get his name on score sheet in Hiroshima's 2-0 victory over JEF United Ichihara — the team's second straight win in the second stage of the league.

Hiroshima now have six points and are tied at the top of the league with Vissel Kobe and defending champions Kashima Antlers.

Elsewhere, Kobe came back from a goal down to beat Nagoya Grampus Eight 2-1 with Brazilian midfielder Daniel and ex-Japanese international Kazuyoshi Miura scoring in the 46th and 64th minutes, respectively.

Fellow Brazilian Augusto, who made his debut in Japan debut with Kashima a week ago, struck home the decider in the 85th minute for a 2-1 victory over Shimizu S-Pulse.

Augusto's compatriot Will scored twice for Consadole Sapporo to lead the goal scoring chart with 14, but his side conceded two own goals to go down 5-2 to FC Tokyo. Yet another Brazilian, Amaral, also netted twice for Tokyo.

The 1999 Asian club champions Jubilo Iwata got off to a losing start with a 1-0 defeat to Gamba Osaka.

In other games, Avispa Fukuoka overwhelmed Cerezo Osaka 4-0 thanks to goals from Claudia Dario Biaggio of Argentina, Wagner Lopes, and a brace by Romanian Pavel Badea.

SLATER SLANGING STRUCK-OUT

Soccer Australia has unanimously decided that the disciplinary charge against former Socceroo, Robbie Slater will be withdrawn.

SA recognised that Slater represented a certain community view of disillusionment towards the management of the code in Australia at the time, and indeed showed great courage through his words.

"We can now move forward and engage individuals with experience in soccer like Robbie Slater and harness their thoughts and commitment in a more constructive manner", according to a statement .

"Robbie Slater is a former LG Socceroo who has established himself as a successful personality in soccer in Australia and it was important that we brought this outstanding issue to a close. In future we should be working with, and listening to, people of Robbie's experience for the betterment of our game," Chairman Ian Knop said.

Also, Slater will be invited to the forthcoming Media Forum that Soccer Australia will be conducting with Australian Media organisations.

Melita Eagles duo off to Man Utd

Two of Australia's brightest soccer prospects are aiming for mouth-watering contracts with glamour English club Manchester United.

Striker Chris Camillieri and goalkeeper Liam Curren are members of the newly founded Parramatta Eagles Soccer Academy based at Granville in Sydney's west, who jetted out of Sydney on August 20 to trial with English champions, Manchester United Football Club.

Parramatta Eagles Soccer Academy has secured a five year, fully funded agreement with the glamour English club, to be their sole training and recruitment base for the Oceania region.

It's anticipated Chris and Liam will be the first of many academy players to be offered opportunities with Manchester United.

The academy's aim is to identify, develop and train talented young soccer players in the 10 to 17 years age group for future careers not only overseas but also in the domestic Australian competitions.

WESTON CREEK CONTINUE FREEFALL

By Graham Cooke

Tuggeranong United struggled out of the ACT Premiership's basement on Sunday after a week of mixed fortunes for the teams at the wrong end of the table.

United beat Weston Creek Royals 3-0 three days after crashing to the University of Canberra 5-0 in a mid-week catch-up game. Those results assure the University of seventh spot, while leaving the Royals as likely candidates for the wooden spoon.

At the other end of the table, Olympic's unbeaten run came to an end with a 2-0 reverse at the hands of a resurgent Monaro, and with a midweek game against league leaders Canberra Deakin, followed by a bye, their hold on a finals spot suddenly looks less than secure.

Tuggeranong coach Graham Plath agreed it was not a pretty game to watch, but the result was more than satisfactory for his struggling team. "We don't want to finish on the bottom, and that's what we were playing for today," he said.

"We were all feeling down after that mid-week drubbing but this has given us some enthusiasm to take into our last game against Gungahlin Juventus."

Both sides had squandered chances before United took the lead after 18 minutes, young striker Carl Pideski fastening on to a through ball to score.

A two-goal burst midway through the second half sealed the game. Adam Candipodero brought down Matthew Mensir in the penalty area and veteran Alan Strachan took a near-perfect spot kick which goalkeeper Peter Flores could only watch into the net.

Three minutes later Tuggeranong were 3-0 up as Mensir crossed to Loic David. His first shot was blocked but David pounced on the rebound and this time found the back of the net.

Chris Citowicki might have gained a late consolation goal for the Creek, but Brett Dickens, was down to his shot, pushing it round the post for a corner.

Creek coach Andy Diggle said his side was under-strength, 'but that's not an excuse, Tuggeranong played well, had better structure in their team and deserved to win.

"We have worked hard for very little reward this year, but were just not up to it today. We will continue to develop some of our under-17 and 19 players and bring them through to what we hope will be a better season in 2002."

Olympic coach Baz Giampaolo said his team deserved nothing more from their 2-0 loss to Monaro. "We've had a good run, and the last time we lost was to Monaro in the first half of the season," he said. "We were guilty of too many defensive blunders."

A hat trick by George Cattanach led the way for Juventus' 6-0 win over Capital City Suns. Coach Ian Heywood said his team dominated for most of the game. ìItís very heartening to get this result over a side we may well meet again in the finals," he said.

Juventus' other scorers were Matt Valeri, Mark Conlon and Steve Lazzari.

Belconnen United increased the pressure on the top four with a 3-0 win over the University of Canberra. University coach Tony Brennan said his side were jaded after their mid-week win. "With a totally amateur team and a thin squad it's difficult to play two games in four days," he said.

ACT PREMIERSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Canberra Deakin	13	11	2	0	49	9	35
Gungahlin Juventus	14	11	0	3	50	11	33
Canberra Olympic	14	7	3	4	33	18	24
Capital City Suns	14	7	2	5	38	33	23
Belconnen United	14	7	1	6	27	21	22
Monaro	14	6	1	7	20	27	19
University of Canberra	14	4	1	9	19	44	13
Tuggeranong United	15	2	2	11	20	44	8
Weston Creek Royals	14	2	0	12	12	62	6

DEAKIN UPSTAGE SYDNEY UTD

By Graham Cooke

Canberra Deakin upset NSL side Sydney United 2-1 in a pre-season friendly at Deakin Oval on Sunday.

With a bye in the local competition, Deakin had been expected to provide nothing more than an easy training run for their glamorous opponents, instead they were 2-0 up in the first 20 minutes with goals from Michael Barac and Daniel Jukic.

United hit back through new signing Paul Bilokapic before half time, but a strong, disciplined Deakin defence denied then an equaliser in the second half.

Deakin coach Vlado Horvat said the result was a pleasant surprise 'especially as I had several key players either injured or resting', he said.

"I tried a few new combinations, and having Barac and Jukic up front was an obvious success."

Wolves cage Menai Hawks

The Wollongong Wolves last week Tuesday evening had their first run of sorts in a very successful promotion at Menai.

In an effort to promote the back-to-back NSL Champions in Sydney and southern suburbs, the Wolves had coaching clinics with the local kids and held an autograph signing session before taking on the Menai Hawks in a 35 minute-each -half exhibition.

The Wolves ran out 3-0 winners with new signing Naum Sekulovski bagging a brace, including a spectacular 20 metre volley which crashed-in off the crossbar. Young striker Liam Austin was also on target with the third goal in the pre-season win. At the end of the game the teams embarked in a penalty shoot-out in a re-enactment of the Wolves Grand Final in Perth last year. This time, however, the Wolves ended on the losing side.

Italian Serie A

Home			Away
Round 1 26.8.2001			**Round 18** 13.1.2002
...:...	Bologna	v	Atalanta ...:...
...:...	Brescia	v	Milan ...:...
...:...	Fiorentina	v	Chievo ...:...
...:...	Inter	v	Perugia ...:...
...:...	Juventus	v	Venezia ...:...
...:...	Lazio	v	Piacenza ...:...
...:...	Lecce	v	Parma ...:...
...:...	Udinese	v	Torino ...:...
...:...	Verona	v	Roma ...:...

Home			Away
Round 2 9.9.2001			**Round 19** 20.1.2002
...:...	Atalanta	v	Juventus ...:...
...:...	Chievo	v	Bologna ...:...
...:...	Milan	v	Fiorentina ...:...
...:...	Parma	v	Inter ...:...
...:...	Perugia	v	Lazio ...:...
...:...	Piacenza	v	Lecce ...:...
...:...	Roma	v	Udinese ...:...
...:...	Torino	v	Brescia ...:...
...:...	Venezia	v	Verona ...:...

Home			Away
Round 3 16.9.2001			**Round 20** 27.1.2002
...:...	Bologna	v	Parma ...:...
...:...	Brescia	v	Lecce ...:...
...:...	Fiorentina	v	Atalanta ...:...
...:...	Inter	v	Venezia ...:...
...:...	Juventus	v	Chievo ...:...
...:...	Lazio	v	Torino ...:...
...:...	Piacenza	v	Roma ...:...
...:...	Udinese	v	Milan ...:...
...:...	Verona	v	Perugia ...:...

Home			Away
Round 7 14.10.2001			**Round 24** 24.2.2002
...:...	Brescia	v	Chievo ...:...
...:...	Juventus	v	Torino ...:...
...:...	Lazio	v	Atalanta ...:...
...:...	Lecce	v	Fiorentina ...:...
...:...	Milan	v	Venezia ...:...
...:...	Parma	v	Piacenza ...:...
...:...	Perugia	v	Roma ...:...
...:...	Udinese	v	Inter ...:...
...:...	Verona	v	Bologna ...:...

Home			Away
Round 8 21.10.2001			**Round 25** 3.3.2002
...:...	Atalanta	v	Udinese ...:...
...:...	Bologna	v	Juventus ...:...
...:...	Chievo	v	Parma ...:...
...:...	Fiorentina	v	Verona ...:...
...:...	Inter	v	Milan ...:...
...:...	Piacenza	v	Brescia ...:...
...:...	Roma	v	Lecce ...:...
...:...	Torino	v	Perugia ...:...
...:...	Venezia	v	Lazio ...:...

Home			Away
Round 9 28.10.2001			**Round 26** 10.3.2002
...:...	Brescia	v	Venezia ...:...
...:...	Chievo	v	Torino ...:...
...:...	Juventus	v	Inter ...:...
...:...	Lecce	v	Atalanta ...:...
...:...	Milan	v	Bologna ...:...
...:...	Parma	v	Verona ...:...
...:...	Perugia	v	Piacenza ...:...
...:...	Roma	v	Lazio ...:...
...:...	Udinese	v	Fiorentina ...:...

Home			Away
Round 13 2.12.2001			**Round 30** 7.4.2002
...:...	Atalanta	v	Inter ...:...
...:...	Bologna	v	Torino ...:...
...:...	Fiorentina	v	Piacenza ...:...
...:...	Juventus	v	Perugia ...:...
...:...	Lecce	v	Lazio ...:...
...:...	Milan	v	Chievo ...:...
...:...	Roma	v	Venezia ...:...
...:...	Udinese	v	Parma ...:...
...:...	Verona	v	Brescia ...:...

Home			Away
Round 14 9.12.2001			**Round 31** 14.4.2002
...:...	Brescia	v	Inter ...:...
...:...	Chievo	v	Lecce ...:...
...:...	Lazio	v	Fiorentina ...:...
...:...	Milan	v	Juventus ...:...
...:...	Parma	v	Roma ...:...
...:...	Perugia	v	Venezia ...:...
...:...	Piacenza	v	Bologna ...:...
...:...	Torino	v	Atalanta ...:...
...:...	Udinese	v	Verona ...:...

Home			Away
Round 15 16.12.2001			**Round 32** 21.4.2002
...:...	Atalanta	v	Parma ...:...
...:...	Bologna	v	Perugia ...:...
...:...	Fiorentina	v	Brescia ...:...
...:...	Inter	v	Chievo ...:...
...:...	Juventus	v	Piacenza ...:...
...:...	Lecce	v	Torino ...:...
...:...	Roma	v	Milan ...:...
...:...	Venezia	v	Udinese ...:...
...:...	Verona	v	Lazio ...:...

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A 2001/2002

Home			Away
Round 4 23.9.2001			**Round 21** 3.2.2002
...:...	Atalanta	v	Verona ...:...
...:...	Chievo	v	Piacenza ...:...
...:...	Lecce	v	Juventus ...:...
...:...	Milan	v	Lazio ...:...
...:...	Parma	v	Brescia ...:...
...:...	Perugia	v	Udinese ...:...
...:...	Roma	v	Fiorentina ...:...
...:...	Torino	v	Inter ...:...
...:...	Venezia	v	Bologna ...:...

Home			Away
Round 5 30.9.2001			**Round 22** 10.2.2002
...:...	Brescia	v	Atalanta ...:...
...:...	Fiorentina	v	Venezia ...:...
...:...	Inter	v	Bologna ...:...
...:...	Juventus	v	Roma ...:...
...:...	Lazio	v	Parma ...:...
...:...	Perugia	v	Milan ...:...
...:...	Piacenza	v	Torino ...:...
...:...	Udinese	v	Chievo ...:...
...:...	Verona	v	Lecce ...:...

Home			Away
Round 6 10.10.2001			**Round 23** 17.2.2002
...:...	Atalanta	v	Milan ...:...
...:...	Bologna	v	Udinese ...:...
...:...	Chievo	v	Lazio ...:...
...:...	Fiorentina	v	Juventus ...:...
...:...	Inter	v	Verona ...:...
...:...	Lecce	v	Perugia ...:...
...:...	Roma	v	Brescia ...:...
...:...	Torino	v	Parma ...:...
...:...	Venezia	v	Piacenza ...:...

Home			Away
Round 10 4.11.2001			**Round 27** 17.3.2002
...:...	Atalanta	v	Roma ...:...
...:...	Bologna	v	Fiorentina ...:...
...:...	Inter	v	Lecce ...:...
...:...	Lazio	v	Brescia ...:...
...:...	Parma	v	Perugia ...:...
...:...	Piacenza	v	Udinese ...:...
...:...	Torino	v	Milan ...:...
...:...	Venezia	v	Chievo ...:...
...:...	Verona	v	Juventus ...:...

Home			Away
Round 11 18.11.2001			**Round 28** 24.3.2002
...:...	Atalanta	v	Venezia ...:...
...:...	Fiorentina	v	Torino ...:...
...:...	Juventus	v	Parma ...:...
...:...	Lecce	v	Bologna ...:...
...:...	Milan	v	Piacenza ...:...
...:...	Perugia	v	Brescia ...:...
...:...	Roma	v	Inter ...:...
...:...	Udinese	v	Lazio ...:...
...:...	Verona	v	Chievo ...:...

Home			Away
Round 12 25.11.2001			**Round 29** 30.3.2002
...:...	Bologna	v	Roma ...:...
...:...	Brescia	v	Udinese ...:...
...:...	Chievo	v	Perugia ...:...
...:...	Inter	v	Fiorentina ...:...
...:...	Lazio	v	Juventus ...:...
...:...	Parma	v	Milan ...:...
...:...	Piacenza	v	Atalanta ...:...
...:...	Torino	v	Verona ...:...
...:...	Venezia	v	Lecce ...:...

Home			Away
Round 16 23.12.2001			**Round 33** 28.4.2002
...:...	Brescia	v	Juventus ...:...
...:...	Chievo	v	Roma ...:...
...:...	Lazio	v	Bologna ...:...
...:...	Milan	v	Verona ...:...
...:...	Parma	v	Fiorentina ...:...
...:...	Perugia	v	Atalanta ...:...
...:...	Piacenza	v	Inter ...:...
...:...	Torino	v	Venezia ...:...
...:...	Udinese	v	Lecce ...:...

Home			Away
Round 17 6.1.2002			**Round 34** 5.5.2002
...:...	Atalanta	v	Chievo ...:...
...:...	Bologna	v	Brescia ...:...
...:...	Fiorentina	v	Perugia ...:...
...:...	Inter	v	Lazio ...:...
...:...	Juventus	v	Udinese ...:...
...:...	Lecce	v	Milan ...:...
...:...	Roma	v	Torino ...:...
...:...	Venezia	v	Parma ...:...
...:...	Verona	v	Piacenza ...:...

Fabio Capello: Coach of reigning Serie A Champions AS Roma, hoping to make it two in a row.

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Grand Final Aftermath ... Grand Final Aftermath

CHALKITIS HURTS AFTER SHOOT-OUT

Well after the final ball had been kicked in hope, anger or despair, Port coach Harry Chalkitis sat down in the Port Melbourne social club, where players, officials and a few faithful had gathered for a wake.

"It hurts," Victoria's coach of the year said about his team's narrow grand final loss. The best attack in the league had lost out to the best defence and only by a whisker.

Victoria's 'keeper of the year and former NSL guardsman Jimmy Kourtis had proved the difference. In fact, he'd kept nemesis Heidelberg United in the hunt all year with miracle saves during games and two penalty shoot-outs.

The loss was hard to take more so because Port had beaten the Bergers 4-1 in the major semi-final to advance straight to the grand final, while Heidelberg had to bounce back through qualifying and a preliminary finals against Bulleen.

"The first half was a repeat of the semi-final when Heidelberg dominated the first 20 minutes and then we slowly started to get back into the game," Chalkitis said.

He had little explanation for losing the match that mattered most, that could have won him and his team to Victorian championship.

"Because of inexperience perhaps, it took us some time to settle-in. I thought their (Heidelberg's) second goal was against the run of play. In the second half there was only one team on the park (Port). The fact that the best team sometimes doesn't win is the way it goes.

"We did our job. We played attractive football and we scored.

Unfortunately we conceded a couple, an own goal is still (a goal) under pressure.

"When it came to penalties, teams have lost world cups on penalties (Italy against Brazil in 1994). It comes down to pressure. Jim Kourtis is an outstanding goal keeper and he proved it again in the final.

"Listening to the instructions from the Heidelberg bench, they were banking on Jimmy in the penalty shoot-out, because (on the park) they were gone. I thought, it was just a matter of time before we would stick one in. But it wouldn't happen," he said.

The moment of revival arrived when the 37-year-old veteran Peter Tsolakis (who incidentally played for Heidelberg as well as South Melbourne in the national league) took control of midfield.

"It is a luxury to have Peter on the bench and he did exceptionally well (when he came on). He created chances and defended. Peter was always going to come on at some time in the middle of the park. He is an influential player," Chalkitis said.

"I'm absolutely proud of the guys. We proved all year that we've been the best footballing side in the premier league. There's disappointment, but the players can all be happy with what they've achieved.

"If we stay together next year, we can only improve. If players move on, I hope they'll make it big in the national league, because there are two or three players who are very good. But it is up to the club to decide which direction they want to take," he said.

Stories By Bert van Bedaf

OLLERTON CONSIDERS FUTURE PLANS

Basking in his grand final win on penalties over Port Melbourne penultimate Sunday, Heidelberg coach Peter Ollerton is now contemplating his future.

2001 Victoria Champions, Heidelberg United displaying their trophy.

"The club wanted to sign me for two years, but I opted for just the one.

I've got to sit down now and think about what lies ahead.

"I'm still totally shocked that we won it. Heidelberg has been in the wilderness for something like ten years. They wanted some stability, that's why they went for me last year, coming from Altona East.

I was very undecided whether to go to the club or not, but they've been very good and they've just picked up a major sponsorship for the next five years.

"There's still a power there and a lot of supporters. There's still a situation they want to get back in the NSL and the foundation is there for them.

They've got plans for the ground (at Olympic Village) and over the next three or four years you'll see a change.

Will Peter Ollerton be there with them? "I don't know. We'll see," Ollerton said.

Psarros laments final loss

Peter Psarros came to Port Melbourne from Fawkner embued with what defines strikers, that uncompromising desire to score.

He and Peter Tsaltas were the pronged attack that drove Port Melbourne to a minor premiership in the Victorian Premier League this season.

Between them they scored nearly 30 goals during the home-and-away rounds.

Psarros won top scorer in the VPL with 15 goals. Tsaltas stopped counting at 12.

In the losing grand final against Heidelberg United, Psarros breathed new life into the Sharks with a second half goal against Victoria's top 'keeper Jim Kourtis.

It brought the score to 2-1 and his finals' tally to four. Evergreen Peter Tsolakis forced an own goal to draw level and the Sharks only bowed out of the contest, losing 4-3 on penalties.

Psarros was on the end of a few more good chances. He poked one over the bar on the run and twice found Kourtis in his path.

He took no part in the shoot-out, but in an outstanding performance he won best on ground, collecting the Jimmy Rooney medal.

He gladly would have swapped it for a grand final winner's medal, rather than the runners-up consolation.

"But what can you do? We tried hard and we didn't get there," Psarros lamented at the post grand final supper at Port's premises at Anderson Reserve after the final loss.

For the best player on ground, handing the winner's medal to Heidelberg was a bitter pill to swallow.

HEIDELBERG'S SPONSORSHIP

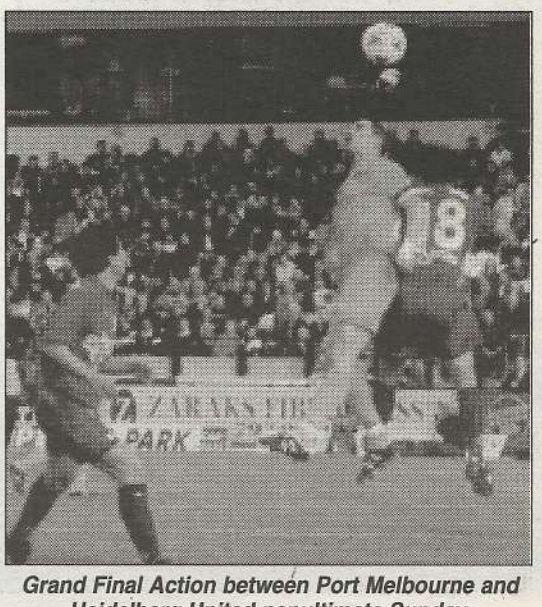
Heidelberg has snared a new naming rights sponsor for next season, club president Elias Deliyannis announced.

"We have signed a major sponsorship with computer technology company Ecotech," Deliyannis said.

"This will go along way towards covering our running costs for the next 12 months. It will also help us secure our longterm viability," he said.

The sponsorship is believed to be $125,000, which will assist in a capital work program, involving building new dressing roooms and a players' tunnel under the Western grandstand. It will be for the next five years.

Its existing major sponsor ABMT Textiles will continue to be involved with Heidelberg, Deliyannis said.



Grand Final Action between Port Melbourne and Heidelberg United penultimate Sunday.

Referee Development Manager

The Victorian Soccer Federation is seeking to appoint a Referee Development Manager. The focus of the role is to develop and co-ordinate programs and policies, to ensure the effective delivery of refereeing services within Victoria.

Primary objectives of the role will include to raise the awareness of referee development pathways, to implement referee recruitment strategies and ensure that educational and developmental opportunities are provided for referees of all levels.

Essential skills include experience in refereeing education and Grade 2 or equivalent qualifications. A high level of interpersonal and communication skills (verbal and written) are also required, along with the ability to liaise with individuals from a wide range of backgrounds.

The successful applicant will be able to effectively set and manage priorities, plan work programs and have excellent time management skills, along with being computer literate. Experience in working independently and as an integral part of a team is prerequisite for the role. An understanding of sports development strategy and experience in the development and implementation of policy and strategic plans is desirable. The role involves evening/weekend work and country travel.

Salary will be negotiated with the successful applicant, dependent upon demonstrated experience and qualifications.

Applicants are encouraged to obtain a position description and information by accessing our website on www.soccervictoria.org.au. The closing date for applications is Friday, 24 August 2001.

Please forward applications marked to the attention of the:
Chief Executive Officer,
PO Box 824, South Melbourne Vic 3205,
Fax: 9682 9777 or email rsmith@soccervictoria.org.au.

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PREMIER LEAGUE WRAP-UPS By Glenn Davis

By Glenn Davis

One-time relegation prospects Easts virtually handed Wynnum its first ever premier league championship with an upset 4-0 thrashing against high flyers Brisbane City at Spencer Park on Sunday.

Brisbane City who joined Wynnum at the top of the table midweek after its much talked about game in hand was controversially forfeited by Bundaberg had no answer for a more committed Easts who led 2-0 at the break.

Easts' hero was Shane Coffey who landed a hattrick while their other came from Jochian Kline.

Brisbane City had its sights on three pieces of silverware this season after downing Brisbane Lions last week in the Queensland Cup final.

However, coach Danny Wright had no qualms in conceding the premiership to Wynnum after his side's disappointing display against Easts.

Mathematically Brisbane City still has a chance to take the title but it would have to win its last game of the season by a big margin against

Mt. Gravatt which is starring down the barrel of relegation after losing 1-0 to Ipswich on Saturday night.

Brad Ditton: Yet again instrumental in Wynnum's victory, this time setting up their only goal.

If Brisbane City did win comfortably it would still need Wynnum to lose its final game by a big score against Ipswich.

"We've blown the premiership and I'm ready to concede it to Wynnum."

"We've blown the premiership and I'm ready to concede it to Wynnum," Wright said.

"They've had an oustanding year particularly with some of the disruptions we've both had with representatives games this season.

"We wanted the treble badly but it wasn't to be.

"Our focus now will be on the grand final but full credit to Easts as they worked hard all day and deserved its win."

Brisbane City showed a lack of discipline in its battle with Easts with Wright conceding his side lost it shape.

"No-one did their job and in hindsight I think a lot of the player psyched themselves out of it.

"In the players' minds they thought we had to win by four or five goals after knowing Wynnum beat the Gold Coast the night before.

"Today we had the mentality of everyone thinking they had to score."

Wynnum coach Peter Tokesi hasn't started cracking the champagne just yet but was over the moon with the Brisbane City result.

"I couldn't get to the game and rang for the scores but I still didn't believe it and rang the federation for confirmation," Tokesi said.

Only hours earlier Tokesi was contemplating the season going down to the wire in the last game and hoping relegation favourites Mt. Gravatt would do what Easts did against Brisbane City.

Wynnum, who maintained its three point lead at the top of the table with a 1-0 away win against Gold Coast, couldn't have timed the championship better with the club recently celebrating its 80th anniversary.

"We won a Queensland Cup under George Cowie a few seasons back but we've never won a premiership or grand final in the premier league," said a proud club president Wayne Gracey.

"Peter (Tokesi) has been with us now for just over three years and much of the credit goes to him with the excellent squad he's built up."

Midfielder Geoff Hurford, who started the game in place of regular Shane Gilroy, scored the game's only goal with a far post header from a cross from midfielder Brad Ditton who broke down the left and beat two defenders.

Neither side had many scoring opportunities but the Gold Coast applied a lot of pressure in the ten minutes before half time but were denied by two superb saves from Wynnum keeper Daniel Duke.

"Gold Coast were without Adam Poric who had a knee injury but it was one of those games that whoever scored first would win," Tokesi said.

"Regardless of who we've played recently we've been creating chances but against the Gold Coast we were quite restricted.

"A lot of that has to do with the way the Gold Coast defended so well."

Daniel Duke: Kept a clean sheet for Wynnum who continue to lead the XXXX Premiership.

While Wynnum all but wrapped up the premiership battle, the relegation fight will go down to the wire with Mt. Gravatt and Bundaberg favoured for the chop after Pine Rivers skipped two points clear of the pair following a nil-all draw with Toowoomba.

Bundaberg, who are in equal last place on 14 points with Mt Gravatt, went down 3-1 to Rochedale Rovers while Brisbane Lions ran out comfortable 4-1 winner at home over Taringa Rovers.

Mt Gravatt coach Mal Bland isn't giving in to relegation without a fight and is optimistic the Hawks can again prove a bogey side for Brisbane City in their relegation decider.

Peter Tokesi: Leading Brisbane City within sight of the premiership title.

"We beat Brisbane City in two of the three games we played them last year and it's not impossible to beat them again," Bland said.

"We beat Brisbane Lions this year on our home ground and we're playing City at home this time.

"Although we lost to Ipswich I thought we deserved something from the game.

"They only got past us once and scored through Matt Hilli and we were a little tentative in front of goals."

Bland said the spirit at Mt Gravatt was still unbelievably high despite the club's precarious position and with Brisbane City assured of second place another upset could be on the cards.

While relegation is still in the balance Pine Rivers can assure Mt Gravatt and Bundaberg go down if they topple Gold Coast at home.

QUEENSLAND PREMIER LEAGUE

FIXTURES (ROUND 22)

Saturday 25th August

Wynnum v Ipswich Knights	7.00pm
Mt Gravatt v Brisbane City	6.00pm
Rochedale Rovers v TBA Raiders	7.00pm
Pine Rivers v Gold Coast	7.00pm

Sunday 26th August

Eastern Suburbs v Brisbane Lions	3.00pm
Taringa Rovers v B'berg Waves	2.45pm

XXXX LEAGUE

ROUND 21 RESULTS

Wynnum	1	Gold Coast City	0
Toowoomba raiders	0	Pine Rivers	0
Rochedale Rovers	3	Bundaberg Waves	1
Ipswich Knight	1	Mt Gravatt	0
Eastern Suburbs	4	Brisbane City	0
Brisbane Lions	4	Taringa Rovers	1

LADDER

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wynnum	**21**	**14**	**6**	**1**	**55**	**21**	**48**
Brisbane City	20	12	6	2	41	19	42
Brisbane Lions	21	10	7	4	45	29	37
IPSW Knights	21	10	7	4	34	20	37
Rochedale Rovers	21	11	4	6	39	28	37
Gold Coast City	21	10	6	5	38	23	36
Taringa Rovers	21	7	4	10	25	33	25
Eastern Suburbs	21	6	4	11	33	50	22
T'wmba Raiders	21	4	6	11	23	37	18
Pine Rivers Utd	21	4	4	13	25	54	16
Bundaberg Waves	20	4	2	14	25	39	14
Mt Gravatt	21	4	2	15	26	56	14

MIKE CARLTON'S JAUNDICED SOCCER JIBES

- OPINION By Joe Russo

Smiling Socceroos: The recent achievements of the Australian national side which saw them picking bronze at the Confederation Cup, confounded critics of the code in Australia.

Soccer is a great game and the only one that is truly global. Followed in all countries and loved by more people than one could imagine, it is a code that has long been viewed with a degree of fear from the other footballing codes in Australia.

When Ian Knop was recently-elected as Chairman of Soccer Australia he immediately declared that soccer was at war with the other codes, namely Rugby Union, Rugby League and Australian Rules.

Knop stated that soccer was no longer the "sleeping giant" amongst the footballing codes.

"I want people to talk kids out of playing rugby league or Australian football and get them into soccer," he said in last week's edition of ABSW.

Knop has certainly, in his short tenure so far, thrown the spotlight onto soccer. The other codes, even from a distance, will keep an eye on developments in this code.

Soccer has the children — more children play soccer than any other code but it loses them in their teenage years. The challenge is now to continue their interest in soccer by providing a marketable, acceptable-to-all and financially stable National League.

The new regime of Soccer Australia has already it seems, captured the attention of people that in the past treated soccer with disdain.

In Saturday the 11th of August edition of 'The Sydney Morning Herald', Mike Carlton, an opinion columnist and Sydney radio personality, mentioned soccer in his article.

The minor of his two articles, was a comment on the recent Soccer Australia election and the involvement of former NSW Premier, Nick Greiner, and former Victorian Premier, Jeff Kennett, in the code.

However, rarely has one stumbled on an article so misinformed and so lacking of knowledge on their chosen topic.

"They had rolled their tanks onto the lawn of long-standing Soccer Australia capo Tony Labbozzetta. Whooshka, out he went... But what on earth do these blue-ribbon Libs hope to achieve?", Carlton wrote.

The reality is that neither Greiner, nor Kennett were present at Soccer Australia's elections. Knop was elected by the stakeholders and the appointment of Greiner as President of Soccer Australia came a few days later. Kennett's involvement in the code is still unclear but an 'advisory position' looks to be on the cards.

Sure there were back-room politics before the elections that saw Labbozzetta dumped, but to imply that it was all Greiner and Kennett is far from accurate. The stakeholders voted and they voted for change.

The title 'capo' given to Labbozzetta is way off the mark. He is the former Chairman of Soccer Australia and in a weekend broadsheet, such as The Sydney Morning Herald, only official titles should be used.

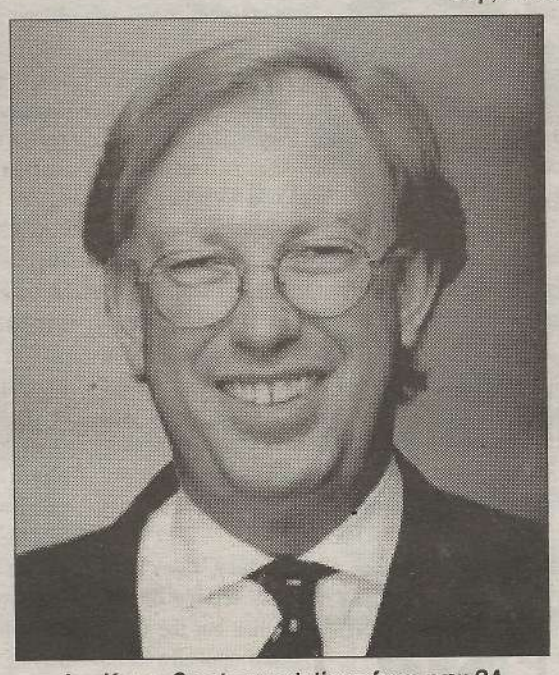
'Capo' is Italian for boss, and it is a title that the Italian media in Italy generally gives to the mafia godfathers. Even if 'capo' was meant to be funny or tongue-in-cheek, it is totally inappropriate to label Labbozzetta with it.

In Labbozzetta we have a person who has just given at least 30 years voluntary service to soccer in Australia and is a fine Australian with Italian heritage. To use a title that is used for hardened criminals in Italy, is totally inappropriate and unacceptable.

"Soccer is a tedious affair. Players run about. Sometimes a goal is scored, sometimes not. Quite rightly hardly anyone in our great sporting nation takes it seriously," he continued.

Does he truly represent the views of our great sporting nation? Is he pretending to speak on behalf of all?

Besides the fact that this quote displays a total lack of knowledge of the game, our great sporting nation will be even greater when we achieve in a truly world game. We need to qualify for the World Cup again and until then we are not competing at the highest levels in the only true world sport.



Ian Knop: Great expectations from new SA Chairman.

Cricket, Rugby and Swimming certainly have their merits but on a world stage their combined following and participation is streets behind soccer.

"It is all right for small boys and girls, especially those with hand-wringing mothers terrified of the rough rugby codes, but it is not for grownups to bother about," he wrote.

A quick look at the participation rates of the various codes only goes to display how far off the mark this comment is. Children choose to play soccer because they like it and are able to display their skills in an enjoyable sport. The key again is that children choose soccer.

"The reason they have these bloody spectator riots in Europe and Latin America is because soccer is so damn boring. Sit through 80 minutes of it and I'd look forward to trashing the shopping districts of Bruges or Buenos Aires myself", was his final gem.

Which riots is he referring to? There have some disturbances at some major events which tends to capture the media's attention. However, given the huge numbers that attend soccer because they love it and the relatively few disturbances, then as a proportion is it virtually miniscule.

Minority elements capture the headlines for the wrong reasons. Wasn't a certain Rugby League club in Sydney earlier in the year in the headlines because of a small element of their spectators had other intentions?

If he feels that he would like to riot in certain cities then maybe he should but I hope that any rioters, for any reason, are met with the full force of the law. And, finally, the "80 minutes" - well, I don't think that I need to add further comment!

Bill Turner Cup attract record crowd

By Dom Mitrio

Two matches in this year's LG Bill Turner Cup were estimated to have reached eight hundred spectators which a senior official claims has probably broken all records since the competition commenced back in 1979.

Both of these fixtures featured the same home school, St Josephs College Banora Point in their matches against Tamworth's Oxley High and their following game (last sixteen) against Newcastle's Lambton High played on the schools ground near Tweed Heads South.

Principal Mr Rick Sidorko, staff, students, parents and local supporters crowded the ground on both occasions. Locals living nearby could not recall ever seeing so many people and vehicles in their area before.

Those who saw the games, witnessed two thrilling encounters.

For Oxley High Roger Dowdell followed by Troy Hearfield, Alex Kurtz and goal scorer Daniel Klump had top games.

In the pre-quarter final, St Joseph's stand out players were again Gilbert Badger, Kyle Offner, Craig Bramwell, James McMullen and Tom Sutton.

Lambton were best served by John Bradbury, Adam Davidson, Clinton Bull and Michael Markovski.

St Josephs College Banora Point 2. (Trent Ernst, Craig Bramwell) vs Oxley High, Tamworth 1. (Daniel Klump)

Referee. Robert Kaehler. Crowd 800 est.

Pre Quarter final: St Joseph College Banora Point 0 vs Lambton High 1 (John Bradbury).

Referee. Jim Sparkes. Crowd 800 est.

BILL TURNER CUP *Results*

ROUND 6

Kirwan	4	Kawana Waters	0
Palm Beach Currumbin	1	Corinda	0
Lambton	1	St Josephs Banora	0
Hunter Sports	5	Killara	2
McCarthy Catholic	2	Menai	1
Concord	3	St Johns Park	2
Holy Spirit Bellambi	2	Griffith Catholic	0
St Francis Xavier	2	Bathurst	1

QUEENSLAND CHAMPS AGAIN

Palm Beach-Currumbin for the second year in a row will be on their way to Edgeworth Eagles Soccer Ground to contest this years final series of the LG Bill Turner Cup.

The Queensland south coast school was again triumphant in winning the state title by defeating West Moreton's Corinda High 1-0 in the semi final and Townsville's Kirwan High 2-1 in the final.

Corinda High beat Kawana Waters from the Sunshine Coast 4-3 in the play-off game.

With all players available Palm Beach-Currumbin coach Sam Wiseman could give this year's final series a real shake. They will play the winner of Newcastle's Lambton High and Hunter Sports High, Gateshead from the neighbouring Lake Macquarie area.

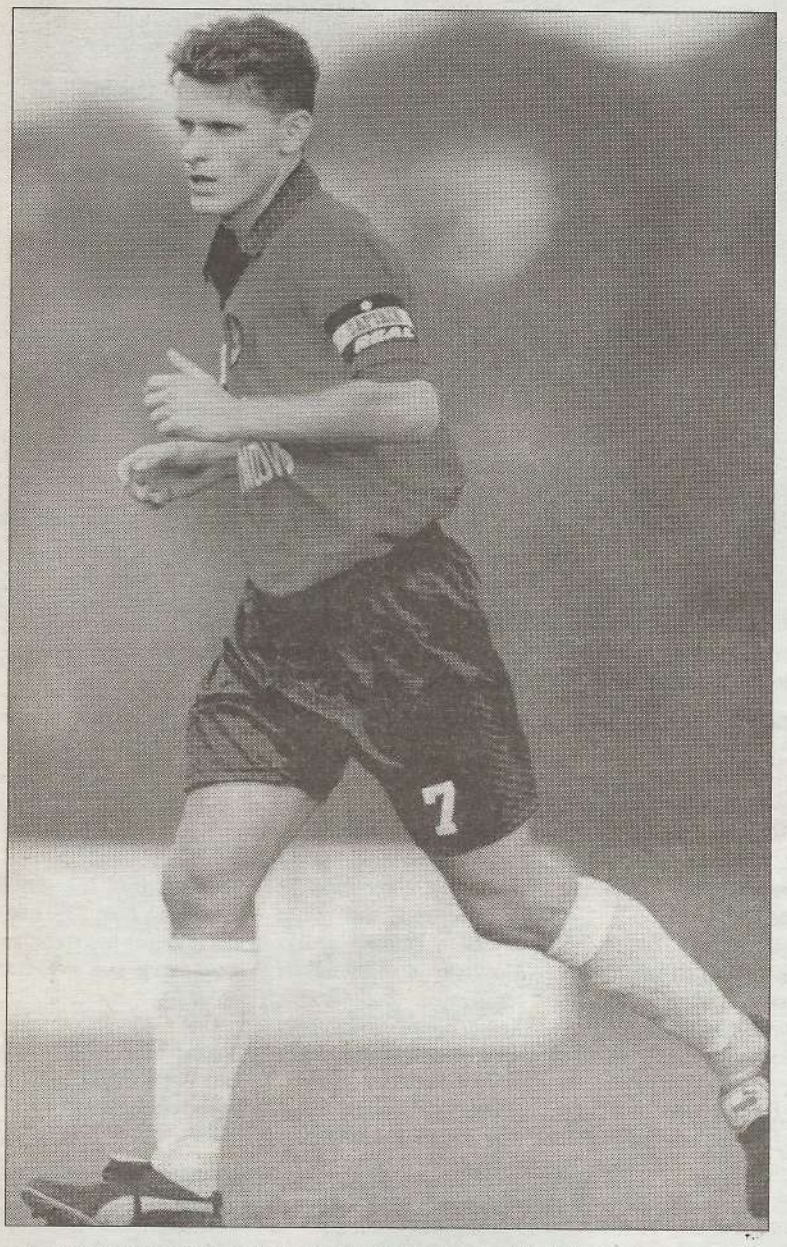
Winter Super League

VALENTINE SPORTS PARK
235-257 Meurants Lane, Glenwood 2768 ● Phone (02) 9629 1800

FINALS SERIES

Bulls draw first blood

Fairfield Bulls	3
Manly-Warringah Dolphins	2



Javier Mancino: Helped set up the first goal for Fairfield Bulls against the Manly Warringah Dolphins. The Bulls won 3-2.

The Fairfield Bulls claimed first blood in the run towards the Grand Final with a three goals to two victory over the Manly-Warringah Dolphins.

On 35 minutes, Mathew Borg had the game's opener after he received a pass from Javier Mancino to turn and toe it under an advancing Dean McCreath.

On the hour mark, Adam Mammoliti converted after a Stuart Van Bentum cross had been flicked on at the near post. Mammoliti controlled and lobbed McCreath after the ball had deceived the Dolphins defenders.

Three minutes later Jason Connolly shot in for the Bullsí third after a Van Bentum cross had found him unmarked at the back post.

Dolphins substitute, Jonathon Mitten made it 3-1 after 75 minutes when he latched onto a rebound to volley first time from the edge of the area and Hong Yuel Ju caused a anxious last 10 minutes for the Bulls squadron when he blasted past Frank Mikuletic after a Mark Beldham cross had rolled into his path.

HILL SCORCH SUNS

Dulwich Hill	5
Rockdale City Suns	0

Francis Awaritefe: Sent off for Rockdale City Suns against Dulwich Hill last weekend.

Dulwich Hill put in a commanding performance to beat rivals Rockdale City Suns in the Elimination Semi-Final at Fraser Park.

Three goals from striker Robert Todorovski along with goals from Ben Deighan and substitute Navid Varess made for a convincing 5-0 win for last season's First Division champions. An under strength Suns team was not able to match their opponents especially after losing Francis Awaritefe who was sent off just before half-time. Dulwich Hill coach Bill Pilovski's team was built around a strong defence that was able to frustrate the Suns who missed the absent Richard Plesa and Amir Ajanovic (both trialling overseas).

RESULTS

ELIMINATION SEMI-FINAL

FIRST GRADE:
Dulwich Hill 5 (R Todorovski 10/50/78, B Deighan 39, N Varess 88) **Rockdale City Suns 0.**

GRADE 21:
Hajduk Wanderers 2 Bankstown City Lions 4.

GRADE 18:
Fairfield Bulls 1 MSC Liverpool 2 (1-1 Full time).

PRELIMINARY SEMI FINAL

FIRST GRADE:
Fairfield Bulls 3 (M Borg 35, A Mammoliti 60, J Connolly 63) **Manly Warringah Dolphins 2** (J Mitten 75, H Ju 83).

GRADE 21:
Manly Warringah Dolphins 2 Fairfield Bulls 3 penalties (1-1 F/T 1-1 E/T).

GRADE 18:
Macarthur Rams 4 Bankstown City Lions 3 penalties (2-2 F/T 2-2 E/T).

Winter Super League

MINOR SEMI-FINAL

SATURDAY 25TH AUGUST,
FRASER PARK (MARRICKVILLE)
1ST-GRADE: MANLY WARRINGAH DOLPHINS V DULWICH HILL, 3.00PM
UNDER-21: MANLY WARRINGAH DOLPHINS V BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS, 12.30PM
UNDER-18: BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS V MSC LIVERPOOL, 10.30AM

MAJOR SEMI-FINAL

SUNDAY 26TH AUGUST,
GABBIE STADIUM (SEVEN HILLS)
1ST-GRADE: BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS V FAIRFIELD BULLS, 3.00PM
UNDER-21: MACARTHUR RAMS V FAIRFIELD BULLS, 12.30PM
UNDER-18: MANLY WARRINGAH DOLPHINS V MACARTHUR RAMS, 10.30AM.

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2002 World Cup Qualifiers

Argentina book ticket as Brazil revive World Cup hopes

Argentina became the first South American side to book their place at the 2002 World Cup finals while old rivals Brazil got their qualification campaign back on track with a vital win.

Argentina guaranteed their place at next year's tournament in South Korea and Japan with a classy 2-0 win over Ecuador in Quito while Brazil beat Paraguay by an identical scoreline in Porto Alegre.

Argentina, the runaway leaders in South America's qualifying competition, were worth every bit of their win in the thin air of the Ecuadorean capital.

First-half goals from Manchester United star Juan Sebastian Veron and Lazio striker Hernan Crespo gave Argentina a win which makes it mathematically impossible for them to finish outside the top four.

Chala, Ecuador's defender who handled the ball in the 18yard box, received a red card for the offence and Crespo coolly stroked in the penalty to leave Argentina in command and on their way to the World Cup.

The early Argentinian goals deflated a fiercely partisan 40,000 crowd at Quito's Atahualpa Stadium, and once ahead Argentina never looked like surrendering control of the game.

Ecuador's Colombian coach Herna Dario Gomez was lost in admiration for Argentina following the defeat.

"They are unstoppable. At the moment I think Argentina are superior to all other teams in South America, certainly superior to us," Gomez said.

"You only have to look at their results - they have beaten everybody," he said.

"We never recovered from that first half. We were not our normal selves but you have to give credit to Argentina because technically and physically they were stronger," Gomez added.

Argentina coach Marcelo Bielsa praised his side's efforts, saying he was pleased for his country's fanatical supporters.

"We are conscious that we have obtained something special and important," Bielsa said. "We're very happy that we could give something back to the fans," he added.

Bielsa's Brazilian counterpart Luiz Felipe Scolari was equally satisfied as his side took a huge stride towards qualification with their 2-0 win against Paraguay.

Scolari twice leapt off the bench to celebrate Brazilian goals, and afterwards hugged his players one-by-one as they left the pitch.

Although Brazil still look a long way off their best form, they will take heart from a well-earned win against Paraguay, who stay second in the standings behind Argentina despite the defeat.

Brazil could not have hoped for a better start, opening the scoring within minutes of the kick-off.

Sao Paulo fullback Juliano Belletti darted down the right flank and chipped a delightful cross in for a completely unmarked Marcelhinho to head home.

Despite bagging the early goal and enjoying near-total domination in midfield, Brazil struggled to carve out clear openings against a well-drilled Paraguayan defence.

Goalscorer Marcelinho continued to buzz around in attack but Brazil's best efforts came via former world footballer of the year Rivaldo.

Brazil soon asserted themselves however, and Chilavert was again pressed into action in the Paraguayan goal, parrying clear a rising shot from Marcelinho.

Then on 70 minutes the Brazilians bagged their second.

Real Betis' richly talented Denilson ghosted down the left flank, lost his marker brilliantly before looking up and floating in a pinpoint cross for a stooping Rivaldo to nod in at the far post.

Argentina's Juan Veron, (second left) is mobbed by teammates after he scored against Ecuador during their World Cup qualifying match last week in Quito, Ecuador.

Next Round of Games

04/09/01
Chile vs. Venezuela;
Peru vs. Uruguay

05/09/01
Paraguay vs. Bolivia;
Colombia vs. Ecuador
Argentina vs. Brazil

07/10/01
Uruguay vs. Colombia;
Brazil vs. Chile;
Bolivia vs. Ecuador;
Paraguay vs. Argentina;
Venezuela vs. Peru

08/11/01
Argentina vs. Peru;
Bolivia vs. Brazil;
Ecuador vs. Uruguay;
Colombia vs. Chile
Venezuela vs. Paraguay

14/11/01
Uruguay vs. Argentina;
Brazil vs. Venezuela
Paraguay vs. Colombia;
Chile vs. Ecuador
Peru vs. Bolivia

**The first four teams win automatic qualification while the fifth-placed side goes into a home and away play-off against Oceania winners Australia. The winner of that match then qualifies for the finals.*

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Argentina	14	11	2	1	35	11	35
Paraguay	14	8	2	4	21	13	26
Ecuador	14	8	1	5	17	18	25
Brazil	14	7	3	4	24	12	24
Uruguay	14	6	3	5	14	10	21
Colombia	13	5	4	4	12	12	19
Bolivia	14	3	5	6	15	21	14
Peru	13	3	3	7	12	17	12
Chile	14	3	2	9	14	20	11
Venezuela	14	2	1	11	10	40	7

Suker denies Irish crucial win

The Republic of Ireland threw away a two-goal lead to draw 2-2 at home to Croatia in an international friendly at Lansdowne Road last week.

Blackburn's Damien Duff scored his first international goal in 21 appearances and substitute Clinton Morrison added a second on his debut 13 minutes from time.

But the home side were pegged back in the final 10 minutes. Davor Vugrinec headed home Croatia's first after 80 minutes and Davor Suker converted a stoppage-time penalty.

The hosts were without two key players with Sunderland's Niall Quinn and Charlton's Mark Kinsella both missing out.

The Irish made nine substitutions during the game including five at half-time.

With Croatia also employing eight substitutes, the second half took on an almost bizarre appearance but the biggest cheer from the 27,000-crowd was when Crystal Palace striker Morrison, a 52nd-minute replacement for Robbie Keane, tapped into an empty net to seemingly seal victory for the home side.

But Vugrinec and Suker, who netted a late winner when the Irish last played Croatia in a Euro 2000 qualifier in Zagreb two years ago, struck late to earn a share of the spoils.

The Republic face Holland in a crucial Group Two World Cup qualifier in Ireland on September 1.

Croatia's Milan Rapaic is tackled by Ireland's Stephen Reid during their friendly at Lansdowne Road Dublin, last week.

INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLIES

Czech Republic . .5	S-Korea 0	Bulgaria 1	Macedonia 0
Bosnia 2	Malta 0	Slovenia 2	Romania 2
Latvia 0	Ukraine 1	France 1	Denmark 0
Russia 0	Greece 0	Slovakia 3	Iran 4
Lithuania 2	Israel 3	Austria 1	Switzerland 2
Finland 4	Belgium 1	Hungary 2	Germany 5
Norway 1	Turkey 1	England 0	Holland 2
Sweden 3	South Africa . . .0	Portugal 2	Moldova 0
Luxemburg 0	Georgia 3		

Madrid's Helguera suffers injury blow

REAL MADRID have suffered a major blow ahead of the new season with star midfielder Ivan Helguera facing a lengthy spell on the sidelines.

The Spanish international suffered a broken foot during his side's 2-1 defeat to Internazionale in the traditional Bernabeu Cup pre-season last week.

The former AS Roma ace picked up the injury ten minutes from time in a challenge with Inter striker Nicola Ventola and although the full extent of the injury is unknown he is expected to be out of action for two months.

Inter won the game thanks to a late winner from Brazilian Adriano after Fernando Hierro had cancelled out Christian Vieri's early strike for the visitors and Real were booed off the field by their angry fans.

The defeat to Inter continued Real's poor pre-season form and has increased pressure on under-fire coach Vicente del Bosque to sign a new defender and Helguera's injury may force them to strengthen the squad.

"I don't know if Madrid need a central defender or not, but I would prefer to remember the good play my team produced," del Bosque told Marca.

"We were well organised and created scoring chances. "We have progressed and the team have improved. We will be starting the official season with many things gained.

Radebe dropped as S-African captain

Lucas Radebe

LUCAS RADEBE has lost the South African captaincy to Charlton Athletic striker Shaun Bartlett.

The 32-year-old Leeds United stopper has been stripped of the captaincy by coach Carlos Queiroz, just a week after his club manager David O'Leary appointed Rio Ferdinand ahead of him for the new season in England.

Radebe pulled out of South Africa's friendly last Wednesday against Sweden with a knee injury and now his long-term future with Bafana Bafana is in doubt.

"I rate Bartlett's commitment and ability as a strong leader on and off the field very highly," Queiroz said.

"I have been extremely happy with the way he has performed his playing duties with those as captain in the absence of Radebe.

"As from now Bartlett will be captain whenever he plays for Bafana. He has all the qualities I'm looking for in a leader. He is certainly up for it and enjoys the respect of his players."

Queiroz was not happy with Radebe's late withdrawal from the squad.

"I hate it when clubs phone me at the last minute and withdraw a player. I'm deeply disappointed but life goes on and this has nothing to do with Bartlett getting the nod as captain," he added.

"I don't hold grudges against any players. I've said what I had to say and will not make a judgment on Radebe."

ERIKSSON DEFENDS ENGLAND'S DUTCH DEFEAT

Sven Goran Eriksson said England showed Holland too much respect during their 2-0 defeat at White Hart Lane, last week.

The loss was the first of Eriksson's reign as England coach and came just 17 days before the crucial World Cup qualifier against Germany.

"We played against a very good side and maybe we gave them too much respect," Eriksson said. We learnt that we should go out with a better attitude - even if they are Holland we should go out and attack them.

"I think we should be at least as good as Holland, but on the day it was not like that."

But Eriksson did take some positives from the match.

"Some young players did very well and that's very important," the Swede said.

He added that he was satisfied with the international debut of Bayern Munich midfielder Owen Hargreaves.

"He played in a position he's not used to playing," Eriksson said. "It was interesting to see him and he played a good game.

"I don't think it was too early for him."

Captain David Beckham said England should not be too disheartened with their performance and could still look ahead to the Germany game with confidence.

"We are a young and inexperienced team and it's a learning experience for us," the Manchester United midfielder said.

"It was a stepping stone for the big one. I don't think confidence has been knocked too much tonight.

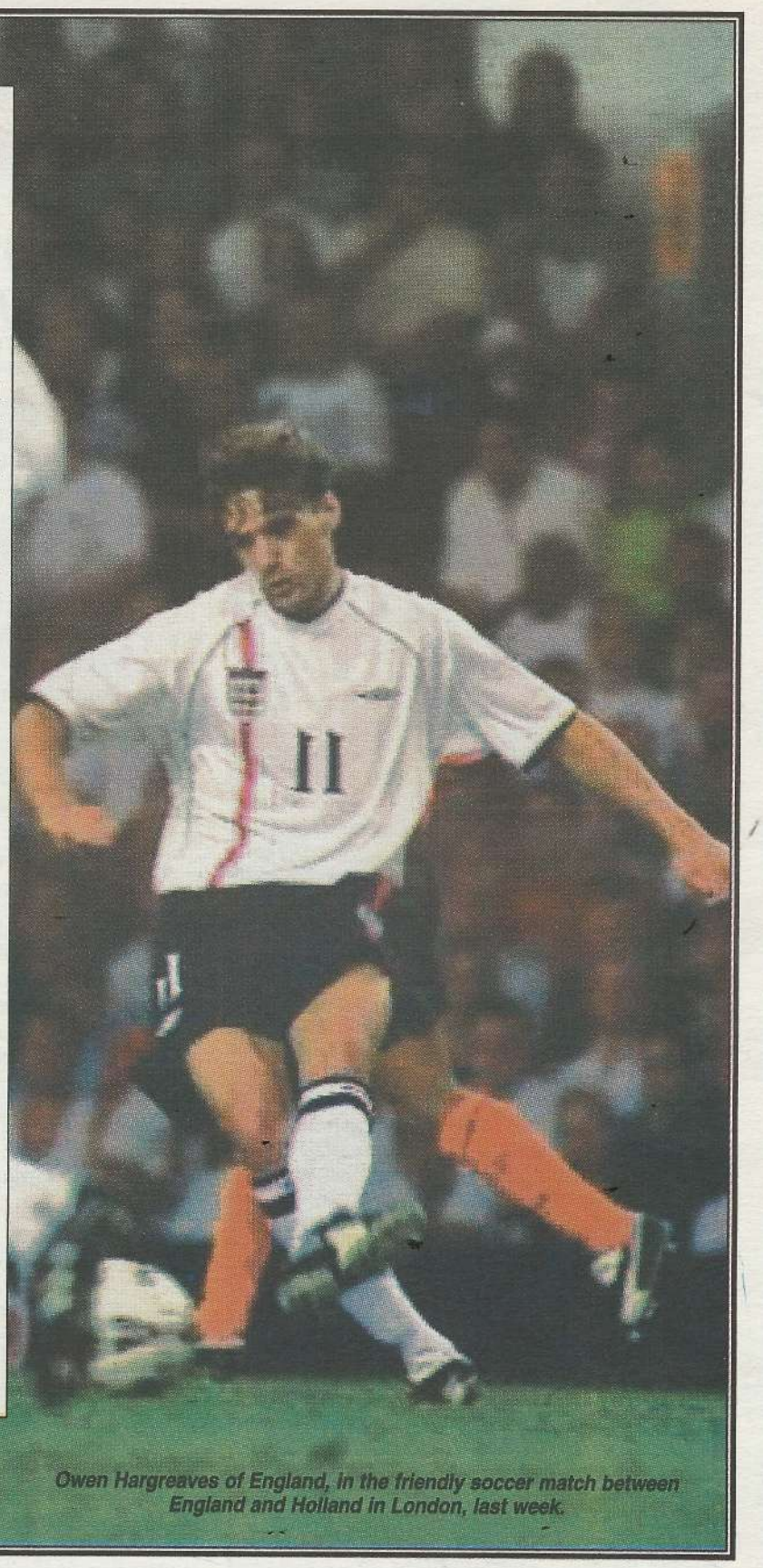
"At the end of the day it's only a friendly and the big one's next month."

Liverpool striker Michael Owen, who came on as a second-half substitute, agreed that defeat was not a disaster.

"We can't play much worse than that," he said. "But just as we shouldn't get too excited about winning against Mexico, we shouldn't get too disappointed about this.

"When one thing goes wrong it seems like everything goes wrong.

"We didn't defend well and we couldn't pass the ball. When you can't pass the ball there's not a lot you can do."



Owen Hargreaves of England, in the friendly soccer match between England and Holland in London, last week.

AUSTRIAN-SWISS BID FOR 2008 EURO CUP

Austria and Switzerland launched their joint bid to host the 2008 European football championships finals last week.

Around 800 political and sporting dignataries including Austrian Vice-chancellor Susanne Riess-Passer and Austrian President Thomas Klestil gathered to watch a video extolling the virtues of the bid.

The organisers are underlining the close proximity of the proposed stadium sites in Vienna, Salzburg, Innsbruck, Klagenfurt, Berne, Zurich, Geneva and Basle, good transport links between the two countries and several stadiums which will be either newly built or entirely-renovated by 2008.

Scotland are also planning to bid to host the 2008 championships.

The last European championships finals were held last year in the Netherlands and Belgium and Portugal will host the 2004 event.

ARSENAL CRY FOUL OVER ANELKA'S TRANSFER FEE

English Premiership side Arsenal have accused Spanish giants Real Madrid of failing to pay up for French international striker Nicolas Anelka, according to press reports last week. Anelka moved to Madrid two years ago for a then club-record $36million.

As part of the agreement the Spanish side agreed to pay back the money in $6million yearly instalments.

But last season's money has never arrived at Highbury, something the English club have now revealed in their annual report to shareholders.

The report quoted in the Daily Telegraph as stating: "Real Madrid FC have not paid in accordance with the terms of the agreement with them and if they continue not to conform, this will cause $12million of the debt to be recovered in more than one year."

Anelka failed to settle in the Spanish club and after a period out of action because of an injury received a hefty fine and a month's ban for refusing to train with his teammates.

The 22-year-old Anelka transferred back to his old club French side, Paris Saint Germain in July 2000.

EFFENBERG FINED FOR ASSAULT

Bayern Munich captain Stefan Effenberg has agreed to pay a fine and apologise to a woman for slapping her in a Munich nightclub in October, last year in order to have assault charges dropped.

A spokeswoman for a state court in Munich said last week that Effenberg, 33, had agreed to pay a 125, 000-mark ($60,000) fine to the court as well as giving 22,000 marks to the woman to cover her suffering.

Prosecutors had charged Effenberg with premeditated assault. They said he had slapped the woman in Munich's trendy 'P1' disco during a row over a table that the player said was reserved for him.

RUSSO WRITES

By Joe Russo

The Serie A is about to start and therefore it is an opportune time to preview how some teams, namely Roma, Juventus, Lazio, AC Milan, Inter and Parma, might go this year.

ROMA

Roma are defending champions and the whole team will be back again this year. Christian Zanetti, a midfielder, has gone to Inter but they have replaced him with former Italian international, Diego Fuser, from Parma.

A good buy will be young Antonio Cassano, a striker from Bari and with master coach, Fabio Capello, in charge they will go close again this year to winning the title. However, a second or third place finish is more likely.

JUVENTUS

Juventus, runners-up for the last two seasons, are hungrier than ever for a title. Major losses are of course Zinedine Zidane and Filippo Inzaghi, but they have bought well. Keeper Gianluigi Buffon is the best in the business, Czech midfielder Pavel Nedved, French defender Lillian Thuram and Chilean Marcelo Salas are also excellent buys.

Juventus haven't won a Scudetto but this is probably their year. Marcello Lippi is back as coach and he needs no introduction to Juventus' fans. Three Serie A titles in his last stint, of nearly five years, at Juventus.

LAZIO

Lazio who finished third last season could well challenge again for the title and they should at least finish in the top three. Dino Zoff, who took over from Sven Goran Eriksson last year, is again coach. The former legendary goalkeeper and Italian national coach, is in his second stint at the club as coach.

Major losses have been Nedved and Salas to Juventus and Juan Veron to Man Utd, while their major buys were midfielders Gaizka Mendieta from Valencia and Stefano Fiore from Udinese.

The local derbies between Roma and Lazio will once again be the highlight of the Serie A season.

AC MILAN

AC Milan have a new coach in Turk, Fatih Terim, but he is favoured to be the first Serie A coach sacked this year. His likely replacement will be Carlo Ancelotti.

Their biggest buys were Rui Costa from Fiorentina and Inzaghi from Juventus. They will probably finish either fourth or fifth because it is hard to see them challenging the big three of Juventus, Lazio and Roma.

INTER

Inter have gone on their usual spending spree and have replaced some of their 'dead wood'. Firstly from Valencia comes Argentine coach, Hector Cuper, who will face an enormous task juggling all of Inter's foreign players.

The team has too many foreigners to gel and too many new faces. Some of their more notable purchases include goalkeepers Toldo (Fiorentina), defenders Fresi (Napoli), Lombardi and Vivas (Arsenal), midfielders Pirlo (Brescia), Robbiati (Perugia), C. Zanetti Binotto (Bologna), and Conceicao (Parma), while the new strikers are: Ventola (Atalanta) and Kallon (Vicenza).

Should they finish in the top five it will require a Christian Vieri or Ronaldo miracle.

PARMA

And, finally this week let's look at Parma. They have lost Buffon and Thuram to Parma, Conceicao to Inter and Lassissi and Fuser to Roma.

Their major buy was French goalkeeper Sebastian Frey from Inter. and Hidetoshi Nakata, the Japanese midfielder, from Roma.

Renzo Ulivieri is once again in charge and, despite their poor start so far in the Champions League, they may squeeze into fifth or sixth place in the Serie A.

In next week's ABSW we will take a brief look at all the other Serie A teams.

Italy ... Italy ...

Salas now a Zebra

Chilean striker Marcelo Salas joined Italian giants Juventus from rival club Lazio, the Turin outfit said over the weekend.

The 26-year-old player known as the 'Matador' because of his killer-finish, changed hands for a fee of some 25 billion lire (12 million dollars) with Yugoslav star Darko Kovacevic joining Lazio as a makeweight.

"When you have the chance to move to a great institution such as Juventus, you consider the situation carefully. It would indisputably be a great step forward," Salas told the Chilean football federation web-site shortly before agreeing terms with Juve.

Salas joined Lazio in 1998, after scoring four goals at the France 98 World Cup finals, from Argentine side River Plate, where he won four league titles.

He becomes the third "big-name" signing of the close season for Juventus who also signed Salas' former Lazio team-mate and Czech midfield dynamo Pavel Nedved as well as French defender Lilian Thuram from Parma.

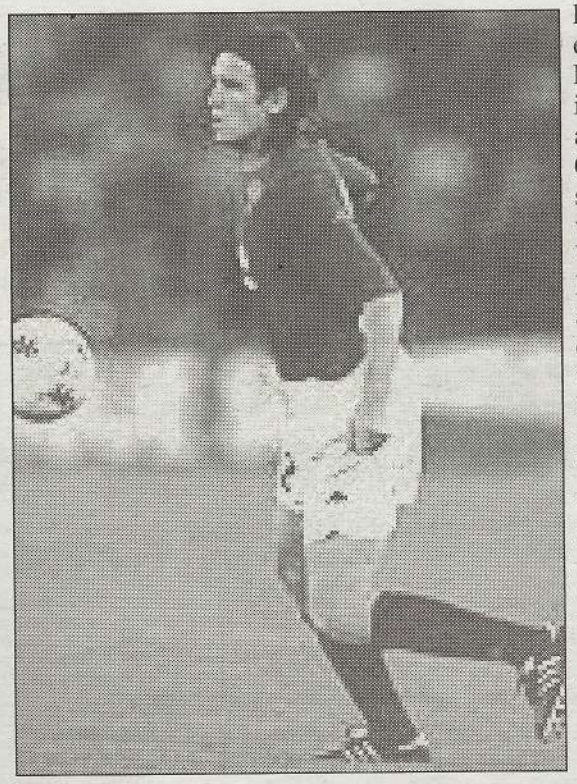
Salas will act as a foil to French World Cup and Euro 2000 winner David Trezeguet in the Juve attack as they seek recover from last season's first stage Champions League elimination.

Juventus' coffers were swelled over the close season by the world record $70 million sale of Zinedine Zidane to Juventus and of Filippo Inzaghi, who joined AC Milan for around 30 million dollars.

Inter Milan's captain Laurent Blanc holds the cup after beating Real Madrid in the Santiago Bernabeu trophy soccer match in Madrid, Spain, last week.

Roma crush Viola to lift Super Cup

Italian champions AS Roma started off as they finished last season with a trophy as they demolished Fiorentina 3-0 in the Italian Super Cup on Sunday.



Vicenzo Candela: Scored for Roma in the weekend's Italian Super Cup win over Fiorentina.

A superb long range effort from French international Vincent Candela, a stunning volley by Vincenzo Montella and a typically opportunist strike by captain Francseco Totti sealed an impressive win for Fabio Capello's men.

Candela struck the early blow shooting on sight to beat the Fiorentina keeper Giuseppe Taglialatela in the sixth minute to round off a torrid opening for their opponents who had to repel two chances from Gabriel Batistuta and another from Candela.

Fiorentina managed to keep the score down to that at the break but were quickly put in their place when Montella volleyed home from Totti's long ball in the 55th minute.

Totti, who had an outstanding match, made the scoreline look more realistic as he added the third eight minutes from time seizing on Taglialatela's spilling of Candela's shot to shoot home.

Ronaldo returns at last!

Brazilian superstar Ronaldo finally put an end to his injury nightmare on Sunday when he made his long-awaited comeback.

The 25-year-old Inter Milan striker, who missed the whole of last season because of a knee injury, enjoyed a gentle 35-minute workout in a friendly against Nigerian champions Enyimba before making way for Nicola Ventola.

His appearance also gave Inter coach Hector Cuper a close up view of his recovery and the Argentinian must have been impressed as Ronaldo put his knee to the test.

It took him just three minutes to get into his stride, showing close control and hitting a low left footed shot which was comfortably dealt with by the goalkeeper.

Then he played a part in the first goal crossing for Christian Vieri to head home in the 20th minute. "I am in good shape and focused and I hope to score a lot of goals for Inter," the injury-jinxed Brazilian star said.

"My knee felt fine and I am very confident about the future," said Ronaldo who received a huge ovation when he left the field.

The Brazilian hasn't played since April 12 last year when he injured his knee on his comeback match in an Italian Cup match against Lazio.

WORLD

English Premiership

Sylvain Wiltord (left) of Arsenal controls the ball as Gareth Southgate of Middlesbrough closes in during their match at the Riverside Stadium, last Saturday.

RESULTS & LADDER

Chelsea 1 Newcastle 1, Manchester United 3 Fulham 2, Charlton 1 Everton 2, Derby 2 Blackburn 1, Leeds 2 Southampton 0. Leicester 0 Bolton 5, Liverpool 2 West Ham 1, Middlesbrough 0 Arsenal 4 Sunderland 1 Ipswich 0, Tottenham 0 Aston Villa 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bolton	1	1	0	0	5	0	3
Arsenal	1	1	0	0	4	0	3
Leeds United	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Man. Utd	1	1	0	0	3	2	3
Derby County	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Everton	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Liverpool	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Sunderland	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Chelsea	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Newcastle	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Aston Villa	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Tottenham	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Fulham	1	0	0	1	2	3	0
Blackburn	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Charlton Ath.	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
West Ham	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Ipswich Town	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Southampton	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Middlesbrough	1	0	0	1	0	4	0
Leicester	1	0	0	1	0	5	0

Ruud van Nistelrooy struck twice for Manchester United as the reigning champions twice battled back from behind to beat newcomers Fulham 3-2 at Old Trafford on Sunday.

The 19 million pound (27 million dollar) Dutchman struck twice in two second half minutes to snatch the points after Frenchman Louis Saha had nudged Fulham in front just after the interval.

Saha, scorer of 32 goals last season, held off Gary Neville and brought down the ball with

exquisite skill before lobbing the stranded Fabien Barthez.

Within seconds, United equalised when Beckham curled in a free-kick which rattled the underside of the crossbar on its way into the net.

Three minutes into the second half and Saha stunned Old Trafford for the second time when he burst onto Steed Malbranque's through-ball and slotted the ball to Barthez's right.

Ferguson's side had looked far more threatening with Cole playing alongside the Dutchman, and it was the substitute who manufactured the first, van Nistelrooy reaching his pass a second before his compatriot Edwin van der Sar to flick the ball in.

In United's next attack the former PSV Eindhoven striker seized on some dithering in defence to put the home side ahead from close range.

☆☆☆☆

Premiership big-spenders Chelsea started the new season with a disappointing draw at home to Newcastle with two goalkeeping errors resulting in goals for each team.

Chelsea got off to a perfect start by taking the lead after just eight minutes.

Zenden collected a short corner and cut inside before firing a low left foot shot straight at Given from just outside the penalty area.

Unfortunately for Given, the ball slipped out of his grasp and trickled between his legs and over the line.

As Chelsea sat back Newcastle grew in confidence and it was no surprise when Newcastle levelled after 77 minutes.

A free-kick was tapped to Robert whose vicious free-kick was fumbled by de Goey and Acuna ran in to poke the ball past the Dutchman.

☆☆☆☆

Newly promoted Bolton Wanderers ripped up the form book to thrash Leicester City 5-0 and kick off the English Premiership season with a bang on Saturday.

Bolton tore one-time England manager Peter Taylor's woeful Foxes to shreds at Filbert Street. A first-half goal blitz saw Bolton 4-0 up at the break, with Kevin Nolan scoring the first goal of thehew season with a header after just 15 minutes.

Michael Ricketts doubled the visitors' tally on 33 minutes, holding off a challenge from Gary Rowett before slamming an unstoppable shot into the roof of the net.

Nolan added to Leicester woes shortly before half-time, while Frandsen got in on the scoring act himself on the stroke of half-time, rifling in a low free-kick past Tim Flowers in the Leicester goal. The Dane made it 5-0 late in the game with a 25-yard effort that left Flowers no chance.

☆☆☆☆

In-form England striker Michael Owen gave Liverpool the lead against West Ham at Anfield, latching on to a backheeled flick from Gary McAllister to slot home past Shaka Hislop after 18 minutes.

But the Hammers equalised from the penalty spot in the 30th minute after a dreadful mix-up in the Liverpool defence involving Stephane Henchoz.

Paolo Di Canio converted, cheekily chipping in as Pegguy Arphexad, replacing the injured Sander Westerveld, dived to his right. But Liverpool regained the lead in the second half with Owen's second to secure a 2-1 win.

☆☆☆☆

Arsenal kicked off their season with a 4-0 victory away at Middlesbrough sparked by a goal from French international Thierry Henry.

He pounced in the 43rd minute, lashing home after a headed clearance by defender Ugo Ehiogu ricocheted freakily off Boro' striker Dean Windass to make it 1-0 at halftime.

Arsenal dominated the second half with further goals from French international Robert Pires and two from Dutchman Dennis Bergkamp.

☆☆☆☆

Leeds started off ferociously against Southampton at Elland Road but were frustrated by some solid defending from the south coast side throughout a goalless first-half.

England midfielder Lee Bowyer broke the deadlock in the second-half however with a shot from the edge of the area on 67 minutes. Alan Smith wrapped up a 2-0 victory for Leeds with an 81st minute strike.

☆☆☆☆

Italian forward Fabrizio Ravanelli made a scoring return to English football as his new club Derby beat Premiership new boys Blackburn 2-1 at Pride Park.

The flamboyant former Middlesbrough star had hardly been in the match throughout the first-half but announced his return in spectacular fashion, curling in a superb free-kick past Brad Friedel.

Malcolm Christie made it 2-0 for Derby after the break, sweeping home past Friedel after a neat ball from Craig Burley on 65 minutes.

Nathan Blake pulled a goal back for Blackburn after fine approach work in the second half.

☆☆☆☆

Kevin Phillips - scorer of 18 goals last season - got off the mark quickly for Sunderland, opening his 2001/2002 account with a 38th-minute penalty as his team defeated Ipswich 1-0 at the Stadium of Light.

Phillips scored his spot-kick after John McGreal fluffed a clearance and fouled Kevin Kilbane.

☆☆☆☆

There was disappointment for Spurs at White Hart Lane, who were denied the chance to welcome back returning striker Teddy Sheringham in their match against Aston Villa, which finished 0-0.

Sheringham, who returned to the Londoners from Manchester United during the close season, failed a fitness test shortly before kick off.

☆☆☆☆

At the Valley, Everton came from behind to win against Charlton after Jonatan Johansson put the home side ahead on 58 minutes.

Duncan Ferguson equalised for the Toffees from the penalty spot on 64 minutes before David Weir made it 2-1 13 minutes from time.

(L-R) West Ham United's Rigobert Song, Svetoslav Todorov and Christian Daily surround Liverpool's Sammy Hyypia as Liverpool keeper Peggy Arphexad punches clear, during the English Premier League match at Anfield.

WORLD

FIFA World Rankings

(Valid until August 22)

FIFA founded 1904

1	France	810	69	Bolivia	516	137	Grenada	298
2	Brazil	795	70	Senegal	509	138	Yemen	295
3	Argentina	764	71	Burkina Faso	506	139	Rwanda	286
4	Italy	735	72=	Algeria	505	140	Myanmar	283
5	Germany	726	72=	Kuwait	505	141	Tajikistan	271
6	Spain	715	74	Iraq	504	142	Surinam	268
7	Portugal	712	75	Bosnia-Herz	501	143	Luxemburg	263
8	Paraguay	711	76	Cyprus	500	144	Ethiopia	262
9	Czech Republic	709	77	Macedonia FYR	498	145	Andorra	255
10	Netherlands	695	78	Canada	496	146	Palestine	253
11	Romania	689	79	Georgia	495	147	Bangladesh	251
12	Yugoslavia	688	80	Estonia	493	148	Maldives	248
13	Mexico	687	81	Congo DR	488	149=	Liechtenstein	246
14=	Colombia	682	82	Cuba	483	149=	Sri Lanka	246
14=	England	682	83	Haiti	482	151	Korea DPR	245
16	United States	672	84	Belarus	480	152	Tanzania	239
17	Denmark	670	85=	Albania	475	153	Antigua & Barbuda	235
18	Croatia	668	85=	New Zealand	475	154	Botswana	230
19	Sweden	659	87	El Salvador	473	155	Benin	225
20	Russia	658	88	Indonesia	470	156	Nepal	220
21	Norway	654	89	Gabon	469	157	Dominica	216
22	Tunisia	647	89	Qatar	469	158	Gambia	215
23	Ireland Republic	640	91	Oman	467	159	San Marino	213
24	Poland	638	92	Congo	460	160	Bermuda	209
25	South Africa	633	93	Syria	456	161	Cayman Islands	207
26	Belgium	631	94	Lithuania	455	162=	Cape Verde Is.	206
27	Trinidad & Tobago	622	95	Latvia	453	162=	Dominican Rep.	206
28=	Morocco	621	96	Guinea	451	164	British Virgin Is.	202
28=	Saudi Arabia	621	97=	Armenia	449	165	Kyrgyzstan	196
30	Uruguay	620	97=	Namibia	449	166	Laos	194
31	Chile	619	99	Lebanon	440	167=	Belize	187
32	Japan	614	100=	Jordan	437	167=	Eritrea	187
33	Costa Rica	610	100=	Vietnam SR	437	169=	Chinese Taipei	182
34	Cameroon	609	102	Kenya	423	169=	Vanuatu	182
35=	Slovakia	608	103	Moldova	422	171	Cambodia	178
35=	Turkey	608	104	Kazakhstan	421	172	Mauritania	172
37	Scotland	606	105	Wales	416	173	Chad	165
38	Egypt	602	106	Northern Ireland	413	174	Samoa	158
39=	Korea Republic	599	107	Barbados	412	175	Guyana	154
39=	Nigeria	599	108	Singapore	410	176	Cook Islands	152
39=	Slovenia	599	109	Malaysia	404	177	Tonga	151
42	Cote d' Ivoire	594	110	Mali	399	178	Philippines	143
43	Austria	592	111	Uganda	390	179	Netherlands Ant.	124
44	Israel	586	112	Panama	388	180	C. African Rep.	121
45	Jamaica	584	113	Azerbaijan	383	181=	Guinea-Bissau	115
46	**AUSTRALIA**	583	114	Libya	380	181=	Macao	115
47	Ukraine	579	115=	Turkmenistan	377	183	Bahamas	111
48	Honduras	578	115=	Venezuela	377	184	Sao Tome e Principe	110
49	Bulgaria	577	117	India	376	185	Pakistan	106
50	Ecuador	571	118	Bahrain	363	186	Aruba	101
51	Iran	566	119	Faroe Islands	359	187	Niger	95
52	Iceland	565	120	Malawi	357	188	Mongolia	94
53	Peru	560	121	Mozambique	353	189	Nicaragua	89
54	Hungary	559	122	Sudan	351	190	Brunei Darussalam	86
55	Ghana	557	123	Fiji	349	190	Equatorial Guinea	86
56	Angola	555	124	Madagascar	348	192	Seychelles	79
57	Greece	552	125	Mauritius	341	193	Djibouti	76
58	Guatemala	548	126	Tahiti	336	194	Anguilla	65
59	Finland	545	127	Lesotho	329	195	Papua New Guinea	61
59	Zambia	545	128	St Lucia	327	196	Somalia	56
61	Thailand	541	129	St Kitts & Nevis	324	197	Puerto Rico	55
62	Switzerland	539	130=	St Vincent/Gre	323	198	US Virgin Islands	48
63=	China PR	527	130=	Swaziland	323	199	Guam	27
63=	Uzbekistan	527	132	Sierra Leone	314	200	Turks and Caicos Is.	21
65	Togo	520	133	Malta	312	201	American Samoa	16
66	Liberia	519	134	Hong Kong	310	202	Bhutan	14
67=	UAE	518	135	Solomon Islands	309	203	Montserrat	11
67=	Zimbabwe	518	136	Burundi	305			

***Note:** Teams inactive since 1991 and teams which have not played yet do not appear in the table.*

Transfer News ... Transfer News ...

Jardel, Nyarko bound for Monaco

Brazilian striker Mario Jardel is on the verge of completing the deal with French side Monaco, along with estranged Everton midfielder, Alex Nyarko.

According to the Galatasaray vice-president, the possibility of Jardel's move to France is 90%. However, a month ago Jardel was set to move to the other French club Olympique Marseille as well, but finally the deal was blocked as Brazilian forward refused to join the team.

Monaco are also in advanced talks with Everton's wantaway midfielder Alex Nyarko, a source close to Monaco said last week.

Monaco new coach Didier Deschamps is ready to pay around $7million for the former Porto player plus one or both of Monaco's unwanted strikers Wagneau Eloi and Nicolas Bonall, the source claimed.

Eloi and Bonnal have both confirmed they have been contacted over the move and the Galatasaray vice-president has been widely reported in the French press as claiming the deal 90 per cent finalised.

Jardel could be the perfect answer to fledgling coach Didier Deschamps' woes as his side has scraped just one point from a possible nine in three matches where they failed to score.

The Brazilian international had been due to join another French side, Marseille, before he backed out of the deal having been criticised by the club's manager Bernard Tapie before even kicking a ball.

Galatasaray are reportedly desperate to sell the striker to raise badly-needed funds.

Mario Jardel: Attracting interest from Monaco.

POPESCU JOINS LECCE FOR SWANSONG

Gheorghe Popescu has moved to Italian Serie A club Lecce from Turkey's Galatasaray, the Romanian international defender said over the weekend. 'I decided to leave Turkey to end my playing career in Italy in two years time,' Popescu told Reuters by telephone from Istanbul.

Popescu gave no financial details of the two-year deal, which he signed late on Friday, but the Turkish club's website said the contract was worth $1 million.

The 31-year-old returned to the Romania team to win his 102nd cap in a friendly against Slovenia last Wednesday after a one-year break from international football.

He has also played for Universitatea Craiova, PSV Eindhoven, Tottenham Hotspur and Barcelona.

KELLER CLOSE TO SPURS DEAL

United States international goalkeeper Kasey Keller has agreed to join English Premiership side Tottenham on a free transfer, his agent said last week.

Keller, 31, who left Spanish side Rayo Vallecano in the summer, is a familiar figure to English football fans after playing for Millwall and Leicester between 1991-1999.

His agent, Colin Poundford said: "After several offers that the player has received this summer, from many teams including Besiktas, Tottenham and another important English side, Keller has decided to sign for Tottenham Hotspur."

VILLA SET TO LAND GALA'S UNSAL

ASTON VILLA are believed to have made an offer for Turkish defender Hakan Unsal and look set to beat off rival bids from Spanish sides Deportivo La Coruna and Mallorca to land the Galatasaray full back.

The 28-year-old left back, who is a regular fixture in the national side, is known to prefer a move to England rather than La Liga, where he would link up with international team-mate Alpay Ozalan at Villa Park.

Despite their European success in recent seasons, Galatasaray remain in financial dire-straits and with Mario Jardel`s transfer out of Istanbul remaining incomplete, they are now looking to sell Unsal.

Villa officials are thought to have held a meeting with the player's representative Ahmet Bulut and agreed personal terms last week.

If all goes according to plan, Unsal will fly into England within this week to finalise the move, which seemingly now only requires the two clubs to agree a fee.

Aston Villa have been looking to bolster their squad before the start of the new campaign and Unsal will provide them with a natural left foot and give them a different option to the likes of Alan Wright and Steve Staunton.

Villa have played down the reports, saying: "This is news to us. These reports are completely wide of the mark. Thereís nothing in them."

However, reports from Turkey are insisiting that Villa are leading the chase.

Youri Djorkaeff: "I'm feeling better and better ..."

Djorkaeff remains with Kaisers

YOURI DJORKAEFF has said he is feeling well into the new season in Germany, despite not being able to secure a move away from Kaiserslautern and missing the start of the campaign due to suspension.

The 33-year-old French international was desperately hoping for a move this summer after falling out with Red Devils coach Andreas Brehme, but although there was a recent link with Marseille, no move was forthcoming.

Despite this disappointment, Djorkaeff is determined to make the most of this campaign and retain his place in Roger Lemmere's side as they look to retain the World Cup.

"I feel very well, even serene," Djorkaeff said. "I am feeling better and better in training. I played in the training matches during the week and am almost ready to start.

"I know that if I stay here it will be twice as difficult as anywhere else, with the sacrifices I have to make. But if I have to wake up at 7 am to succeed, I will do that."

WORLD

SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP

LIVINGSTON SURPRISE CELTIC

Sweden international Henrik Larsson missed a second-half penalty as reigning Scottish champions Celtic were held to a 0-0 draw at newly-promoted Livingston over the weekend.

Larsson was denied by Livingston's Spanish goalkeeper Javier Broto after Gary Bollan was sent off for lashing out at Jackie McNamara in the penalty area.

The visitors were also rocked by the loss of Swedish international defender Johan Mjallby with an ankle injury just four days before Celtic's Champions League qualifier at home to Dutch giants Ajax.

Hearts answered their critics in emphatic style with a 3-1 win at home to Dundee.

The Edinburgh club were criticised for their defensive tactics in last week's defeat at Celtic.

But they displayed their attacking prowess with a lethal three goal burst in five minutes which sealed their second win of the season as early as the 17th minute.

Colin Cameron set the ball rolling with a crisp volley after 12 minutes before two goals in four minutes from Gary Wales put the home team in control.

Georgi Nemsadze scored a late consolation for the visitors with a stunning individual effort five minutes from time.

First half goals from Paul Di Giacomo and Mickael Pizzo gave Kilmarnock a narrow 2-1 win at home to St Johnstone. New signing Willie Falconer scored a last-minute consolation for the visitors who are now rooted to the foot of the table without a point.

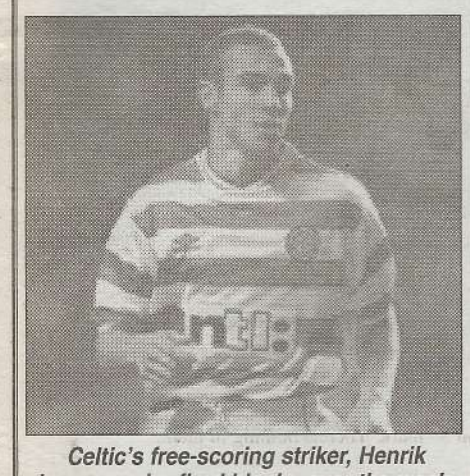
Jim Hamilton played a part in all of Dundee United's goals in their thrilling 3-2 win at home to Dunfermline.

The big striker set up Jim McIntyre and Derek Lilley for first half goals but the visitors fought back and a Scott Thomson double - from the penalty spot and a free-kick - meant that Dunfermline looked like hanging on for the point. But referee Stuart Dougal pointed to the spot again with just nine minutes to go and Hamilton converted to seal the win.

Aberdeen picked up their first three points of the season with a 4-2 win over Motherwell at Pittodrie.

The hosts took the lead after 20 minutes through Ben Thornley only to see Motherwell reply with goals from Karl Ready and David Kelly.

Aberdeen refused to buckle and equalised in the 37th minute through Robbie Winters and second-half goals from Darren Mackie and substitute Hicham Zerouali gave the home side a well-deserved victory.



Celtic's free-scoring striker, Henrik Larsson who fired blanks over the weekend against Livingston.

Aberdeen 4 Motherwell 2, Dundee Utd 3 Dunfermline 2, Hearts 3 Dundee 1 Kilmarnock 2 St Johnstone 1, Livingston 0 Celtic 0, Rangers 2 Hibernian 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	4	3	1	0	6	0	10
Rangers	4	2	2	0	9	3	8
Dundee Utd	4	2	2	0	6	4	8
Dundee	4	2	1	1	6	6	7
Dunfermline	4	2	0	2	10	9	6
Hearts	4	2	0	2	5	5	6
Hibernian	4	1	2	1	7	6	5
Kilmarnock	4	1	2	1	6	6	5
Livingston	4	1	2	1	2	2	5
Aberdeen	4	1	0	3	4	8	3
Motherwell	4	0	2	2	6	11	2
St Johnstone	4	0	0	4	1	8	0

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

DORMUND MAINTAIN 100% START

Schalke's goalkeeper Oliver Reck (above) holds the ball as Leverkusen's Ulf Kirsten challenges him.

Borussia Dortmund and Kaiserslautern maintained their 100 per cent records in the Bundesliga on Saturday to move to the top of the table. Dortmund had too much class for early relegation candidates Hansa Rostock, winning 2-0 while Kaiserslautern accounted for SV Hamburg 3-1. Both sides now have 12 points after four matches.

Bayer Leverkusen are in third place, four points behind the leaders after they snatched a 3-3 draw against last year's Bundesliga runners-up Schalke 04.

Meanwhile European and German champions Bayern Munich took care of St. Pauli with a 2-0 victory at the Olympic stadium.

Bayern are fourth in the standings, five points behind Dortmund and Kaiserslautern.

Matthias Sammer's Dortmund went ahead after just four minutes of their match against Rostock when Czech international Tomas Rosicky bagged his second of the season.

Sunday Oliseh doubled the score on 13 minutes while the league's top scorer, Brazilian Marcio Amoroso had a quiet game and was substituted midway through the second half.

Kaiserslautern raced to a 3-0 half-time lead at SV Hamburg thanks to goals from Brazilian new boy Lincoln on 18 and 22 and Jeff Strasser on 28. However Hamburg reacted well in the second half pulling two back from Nico-Jan Hoogma on 56 and Eric Meijer on 64.

Bayern Munich, already deprived of their captain Stefan Effenberg and German international midfielder Mehmet Scholl, lost Brazilian striker Paulo Sergio with a muscle strain that will keep him out of action for two weeks including this week's Super Cup against Liverpool at Monaco.

Ciriaco Sforza scored Bayern's opener on 13 and made the second for Brazilian striker Giovane Elber on the stroke of half-time.

Schalke have played just three matches but will be disappointed with their return of just two points after Leverkusen denied them their first win of the season in their new ground in front of 60,000 fans.

An injury-time free kick from Leverkusen striker Bernd Schneider spoiled the inauguration party and left the visitors in third on eight points.

Elsewhere VfL Wolfsburg and SC Freiburg hammered out a 1-1 draw, 1860 Munich beat Werder Bremen 3-1 away and VfB Stuttgart beat FC Nuremburg 4-2 away.

Hertha Berlin 2 Energie Cottbus 3, Cologne 0 Borussia Moenchengladbach 2 Bayern Munich 2 St Pauli 0, VfL Wolfsburg 1SC Freiburg 1 FC Nuremberg 2 VfB Stuttgart 4, Werder Bremen 1 1860 Munich 3, SV Hamburg 2 Kaiserslautern 3, Schalke 04 3 Bayer Leverkusen 3 Hansa Rostock 0 Borussia Dortmund 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Borussia Dortmund	**4**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**10**	**0**	**12**
Kaiserslautern	4	4	0	0	12	5	12
Energie Cottbus	4	3	0	1	7	5	9
Bayer Leverkusen	4	2	2	0	9	5	8
Bayern Munich	4	2	1	1	6	2	7
B. Moenchengladbach	4	2	1	1	5	3	7
Vfb Stuttgart	4	1	2	1	4	4	5
SV Hamburg	4	1	1	2	5	5	4
Hertha Berlin	4	1	1	2	5	6	4
SC Freiburg	4	1	1	2	5	6	4
Cologne	4	1	1	2	3	4	4
1860 Munich	4	1	1	2	4	8	4
Werder Bremen	4	1	1	2	4	8	4
FC Nuremberg	4	1	0	3	4	7	3
Hansa Rostock	3	1	0	2	1	5	3
Schalke 04	3	0	2	1	3	6	2
St-Pauli	4	0	2	2	1	4	2
Vfl Wolfsburg	4	0	2	2	3	8	2

FRENCH CHAMPIONNAT

MONACO BREAKS DUCK AT LAST

French World Cup-winning captain Didier Deschamps was still left looking for his first win as a coach Saturday after PSG came back from 2-0 down to draw 2-2 with his Monaco outfit.

The 32-year-old, who also guided France to the Euro 2000 title before hanging up his boots in the summer, at least was able to celebrate his side's first goals of the campaign in their fourth match as Shabani Nonda and Ludovic Giuly netted.

However Monaco stayed in the bottom three when Frederic Dehu reduced the deficit with a spectacular overhead kick and Brazilian Aloisio scored his second in two games.

Deschamps, though, remained stoic about his poor start.

"I think we deserved the three points," the two-time European Cup winner said.

"However this will help us immeasurably in our quest for the first win and I feel it isn't far off," he added.

At the other end of the table Lens maintained their 100 per cent record with a 1-0 win over Metz thanks to a free header snapped up by Hadji El Diouf to give them four wins out of four and hand coach Joel Muller a victory to savour as his opponents sacked him midway through last season after 10 years at the helm.

Lyon remained on their heels with a 3-0 home win over Guingamp - Frederic Nee wrapping up the three points with his first goal for the club since joining from Bastia to make it 2-0.

Cameroon international midfielder Marc-Vivien Foe sealed an impressive night's work with the third and leave Lyon three points off Lens .

Bastia inflicted another demoralising defeat on champions Nantes as they grabbed their first win this season with a 2-1 victory leaving the Canaries grounded in bottom place on just one point.

Marseille's promised revival continues to look like a mirage as they went down 1-0 at home to unheralded Troyes to keep them firmly rooted in the bottom three.

Monaco striker, Aloisio helped secure a draw against PSG over the weekend.

Another miserable evening in Marseille's recent history ended when Cyril Rool was sent-off close to the final whistle for a second bookable offence leaving Marseille looking at another desperate fight to avoid relegation.

Lille pulled off the most dramatic comeback of the night as they went behind 1-0 to Montpellier and then were immediately reduced to 10-man after Patrick Collot was sent-off for grabbing the scorer Toifilou Maoulida round the neck and then headbutting Jean-Christophe Rouviere.

However the Champions League contenders picked themselves off the ground and soon levelled through Bruno Cheyrou before Dagui Bakari beat the keeper to a cross

Auxerre 2 Sedan 1, Monaco 2 Paris SG 2, Lyon 3 Guingamp 0, Lille 2 Montpellier 1, Marseille 0 Troyes 1, Rennes 1 Bordeaux 0, Nantes 1 Bastia 2, Sochaux 2 Lorient 2, Metz 0 Lens 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lens	4	4	0	0	7	1	12
Auxerre	4	3	1	0	9	2	10
Lyon	4	3	0	1	7	3	9
Lille	4	2	2	0	5	2	8
Troyes	4	2	1	1	5	2	7
Sochaux	4	2	1	1	7	6	7
Paris SG	4	1	3	0	4	3	6
Rennes	4	2	0	2	7	9	6
Montpellier	4	1	2	1	5	3	5
Bordeaux	4	1	2	1	2	1	5
Bastia	4	1	1	2	4	5	4
Lorient	4	1	1	2	4	6	4
Guingamp	4	1	1	2	2	7	4
Metz	4	1	0	3	2	6	3
Sedan	4	0	2	2	3	6	2
Marseille	4	0	2	2	1	4	2
Monaco	4	0	2	2	2	6	2
Nantes	4	0	1	3	2	6	1

WORLD LEAGUES

ENGLISH FIRST DIVISION

Barnsley 2 Nottingham Forest 1, Burnley 3 Wimbledon 2, Crewe 0 Sheffield Wednesday 2, Crystal Palace 4 Stockport 1, Norwich 2 Manchester City 0, Portsmouth 0 Bradford 1, Preston 1 Walsall 1, Sheffield United 0 Gillingham 0, Watford 3 Rotherham 2, West Brom 0 Grimsby 1, Birmingham 4 Millwall 0, Coventry 0 Wolves 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bradford	2	2	0	0	5	0	6
Crystal Palace	2	2	0	0	7	3	6
Burnley	2	2	0	0	5	2	6
Grimsby	2	2	0	0	2	0	6
Gillingham	2	1	1	0	5	0	4
Walsall	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Wolves	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Birmingham	2	1	0	1	5	3	3
Coventry City	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
Wimbledon	2	1	0	1	5	4	3
Man City	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Millwall	2	1	0	1	4	4	3
Sheff Wed	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
Watford	2	1	0	1	3	5	3
Norwich	2	1	0	1	2	4	3
Barnsley	2	1	0	1	2	5	3
Sheff Utd	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Nottm Forest	2	0	1	1	2	3	1
Portsmouth	2	0	1	1	2	3	1
Preston	2	0	1	1	1	6	1
Rotherham	2	0	0	2	4	6	0
West Brom	2	0	0	2	1	3	0
Crewe	2	0	0	2	0	3	0
Stockport	2	0	0	2	1	6	0

PORTUGUESE

FC Porto 4 Boavista 1, Uniao Leiria 2 Santa Clara 1, Vitoria Setubal 2 Varzim 0, Alverca 1 Pacos Ferreira 0, Benfica 2 Salgueiros 0, Beira Mar 2 Maritimo 0, Belenenses 3 Sporting Lisbon 0, Gil Vicente 2 Sporting Braga 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gil Vicente	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
Benfica	2	1	1	0	4	2	4
Porto	2	1	0	1	4	2	3
Belenenses	2	1	0	1	4	3	3
Pacos Ferreira	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Alverca	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Boavista	2	1	0	1	4	4	3
Maritimo	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Beira Mar	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
Sporting	2	1	0	1	1	3	3
Farense	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Vitoria Setubal	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Uniao Leiria	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Santa Clara	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Braga	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
Varzim	2	0	1	1	2	4	1
Vitoria Guimaraes	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Salgueiros	2	0	0	2	0	4	0

CROATIA

Kamen Ingrad 1 Zadar 1, Rijeka 0 Zagreb 1, Osijek 1 Pomorac 0, Dinamo 2 Sibenik 0, Hrv. Dragovoljac 3 TSK 2, Cakovec 2 Cibalia 2, Slaven Belupo 1 Marsonia 0, Hajduk 1 Varteks 5.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Varteks	4	3	1	0	11	3	10
Zagreb	4	3	1	0	7	2	10
Dinamo	4	3	1	0	8	3	10
Pomorac Kostrena	4	2	1	1	5	3	7
Cakovec	4	2	1	1	7	8	7
Zadar	4	1	3	0	6	3	6
Rijeka	4	2	0	2	6	5	6
Osijek	3	2	0	1	3	4	6
Marsonia	4	1	1	2	5	5	4
Cibalia	4	1	1	2	5	6	4
Slaven Belupo	4	1	1	2	3	5	4
Hrv. Dragovoljac	4	1	1	2	4	8	4
Hajduk	3	1	0	2	5	7	3
Kamen Ingrad	4	0	3	1	5	7	3
TSK Topolovac	4	0	1	3	6	10	1
Sibenik	4	0	0	4	1	8	0

• Manchester United and England midfielder, David Beckham blasts-off the freekick around a wall of Fulham defenders, on Sunday night, to register the first goal for his club. The match finished 3-2 in Man Utd's favour.